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# Edward & Sophie A Private Affair

As Edward Windsor and Sophie Rhys-Jones embark on married life, Alan Hamilton has high hopes for the happiness of a prince who is definitely his own man.



Just before Christmas 1993, a Sunday tabloid newspaper tossed a new name into the royal circus ring. Prince Edward, the Queen's youngest son, it disclosed, was dating Sophie Rhys-Jones, a hitherto unknown lady, and they were shortly bound for the altar. The report was correct in every aspect except timing. By the time they marry at St George's Chapel, Windsor, on June 19, Edward and Sophie will have conducted, over six years, the longest royal courtship in modern history. Edward had overwhelming reasons to proceed with extreme caution and to take his time. In the matter of marriage, the record of the Queen's children has been frankly disastrous. A union between the rarefied, hermetic inner world of the Royal Family and the breezy air of ordinary life outside can never be easy, such is the inevitably yawning chasm between background, attitude and upbringing. The pressure on Edward not to repeat the errors of his siblings is immense.

He looked on in horrified dismay as the marriages of Charles, Andrew and Anne crumbled into separation and eventual divorce. Edward is an intelligent man, and he was sharp enough not to let the lessons of his siblings' failures go

unlearned. He could see that any romance conducted under the prurient gaze of the tabloids had a greatly diminished chance of success.

The couple first met in earnest at a real tennis event organised by Edward; Sophie's public relations company had been hired to handle the publicity, and she herself had to deputise at the last moment for an unavoidably absent Sue Barker. They enjoyed three months of blissful obscurity, but as soon as their relationship escaped into the public domain, Edward took the unusual step of writing an open letter to all national newspaper editors requesting privacy, on the grounds that press harassment had done much harm to his brothers, and could do the same to Sophie. His request was, by and large, respected, but on at least six occasions he went straight to the Press Complaints Commission when he felt his and Sophie's privacy was being invaded.

There were other pitfalls to be avoided. Diana Spencer and Sarah Ferguson both came from broken homes; neither had enjoyed a secure upbringing, and both in their different ways brought to the altar a certain amount of undesirable baggage. Diana was a naive and ill-equipped girl of 20 when she married a man 12 years her senior

with an intellectual capacity that dwarfed her own. Charles, ever the ditherer, was pushed into marriage by a family increasingly anxious that the Hanoverian line be perpetuated, and the awkwardness of the couple was all too plain to see at the announcement of their engagement.

Sarah was, by contrast, something of a vulgarian with a well-documented past who thought that buffoonery was a good survival pack for life in the royal goldfish bowl. It was entirely characteristic that she and Andrew became acquainted by throwing chocolate profiteroles at each other across a dinner table.

Sophie is poles apart from the late Princess of Wales, and even further removed from the Duchess of York. The younger of two children, Sophie is the product of a secure and comfortable middle-class home in Kent, the epitome of Home Counties solidity. Her father Christopher, who runs a tyre-exporting business, worked hard to give her a good private education, and she rewarded her parents with a highly respectable six 'O' levels and two 'A' levels. She has had her share of boyfriends, and is said to remain on good terms with them all. Always a working woman, and now a partner in her company, a career in public relations has taught her

where lie the snares awaiting one about to embark on such a high-profile life.

Good-humoured and self-confident without being in the least bit overbearing, she has shown respect and absolute discretion towards her new in-laws, but has never been daunted by them. Her acceptance into royal circles has been extremely gradual and never rushed, but as Edward's courtship proceeded, Sophie began to appear more and more at intimate family functions, including Christmas at Sandringham and at parties for Queen Elizabeth and the Queen Mother. The Queen, a practical and down-to-earth woman, not unlike Sophie herself, clearly approved, and at one stage remarked privately of her future daughter-in-law: "You wouldn't notice her in a crowd." Far from being a put-down, it was a considerable, if coded, compliment.

As important as Sophie's balanced and worldly nature to the success of a marriage, is the character of Edward—once rather unkindly regarded as the last of the litter—and the nature of his life. He was born royal, but has done much to break the mould and distance himself from the fulcrum of monarchy in a way that even 20 years ago

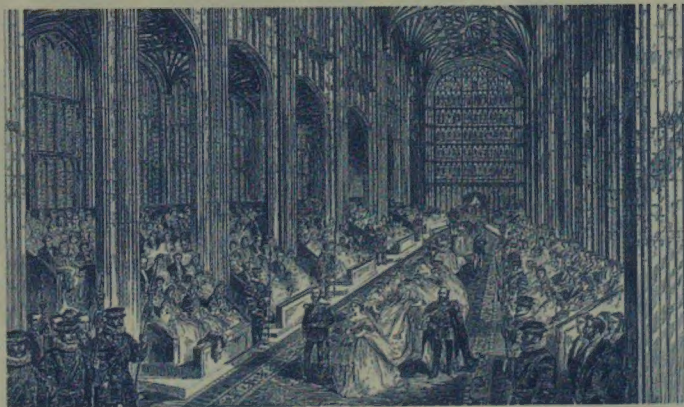




would have been unthinkable. He is nothing if not his own man.

He resigned his commission in the Royal Marines, defying his father who is Captain-General of the élite corps. He went to work in the theatre, initially as a tea boy with Andrew Lloyd-Webber's Really Useful Company, walking to work every day and styling himself plain Edward Windsor. Worse still—and this would have been anathema to royalty not so long ago—he moved on to work in the media, setting up his own television production company and doing his best to run it as a viable business. As if that were not enough, he kept his girlfriend under the same roof at Buckingham Palace, although Sophie insisted at their engagement announcement that they had never actually lived together. Many months ago he moved out of the Palace, and took a lease on a much more modest home at Bagshot Park in Surrey, built by Queen Victoria for her third and favourite son Prince Arthur, and a safe 11 miles from Windsor Castle.

The nature of the Royal Family has changed. What was once an extended family firm with nine of its members receiving generous annual allowances from the taxpayers, is now reduced to the Queen, her husband and her mother, with



the addition of the Prince of Wales funded from the Duchy of Cornwall. Prince Edward has lost his Civil List allowance, and is obliged to live off his television earnings, and whatever his mother might care to give him. Although he conducts a small number of public engagements, and helps run the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, he clearly feels free to pursue his own life in the real world. The present political climate favours a less elaborate monarchy with a smaller cast-list, and there could well come a time when the only performers of royal engagements are the monarch, her heir and, perhaps, her daughter.

If Edward and Sophie seek a normal life with a reasonable degree of

privacy, the omens are auspicious. In future they will attract no more attention than, say, the present Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, although there will be a considerable flurry when and if they produce children. Edward and Sophie are at some distance from the centre of monarchy, and will do their best to make the gap ever wider. The greatest burden of being regarded as public property is bound in future to fall on Prince William; his difficulty in conducting relationships with women could be immense.

Edward's choice of wedding venue is in itself telling. Two of his siblings' ultimately failed marriages began in the full glare of publicity in Westminster Abbey, and a third in

Opposite, St George's Chapel, where Edward and Sophie will marry on June 19, following in the footsteps of, left, Prince Albert Edward and Princess Alexandra in 1863.

St Paul's Cathedral. By selecting St George's Chapel within the walls of Windsor Castle Edward is signalling a more low-key approach rather than a grand public spectacle—although the couple have accepted that part of the ceremony will be filmed. It will be the culmination of a courtship conducted with concern on Edward's part that, while Sophie should not be frightened off, she should understand fully what she is letting herself in for.

In 1986, before he met Sophie, Edward told an interviewer: "My anonymity has gone and I accept that, but you become very conscious of the feeling that if you try to get to know anybody they are going to suffer a stigma for the rest of their lives. I cannot have a normal relationship with just about anybody, but that's the way it goes." Thirteen years after making that observation, Edward may have found normality, or something approaching it, at last.

□ Alan Hamilton is the royal correspondent of *The Times*.









LEFT: STEWART MARK/CAMERA PRESS; FAR LEFT: PATRICK WARD/COLORIFIC

# SURVIVING THE SEASON

How does the London season stay young, fun and full of energy?  
Lucia van der Post probes the secret of its success.

Much of the charm of the London season is that it is not a mere modern invention, but that its roots lie deep in the history and culture of our land. As Angela Lambert puts it in her enchanting book *1939: The Last Season of Peace*, "The season did not spring into being with all its events, manners and codes of speech fully formed. It evolved gradually over two or three hundred years, during which royalty, the aristocracy and social behaviour were constantly changing." But though its evolution was constant the motives behind it changed little. Firstly, there was the

lure of the Court, with its ability to confer honours, preferment and influence, secondly, there was the draw of London itself with its entertainments and fashion and, finally, there was the perennial ambition of the nobility to marry off its sons and daughters well.

As we approach the millennium, "the season", that amalgam of events which has been described as "the sum of all those parties to which the English wear fancy dress" looks alive and well. Darwin would have been proud of its ability to adapt and survive whatever changes society has thrown at it.

Of all the motivating factors it is oddly the most practical—the need for the nobility to introduce its sons and daughters to each other—that now seems most out of date. Today's *jeunesse d'orée* overtly subscribes to notions of romantic love and so is less

amenable to the formality of arranged dynastic couplings and few of them lead isolated country lives or have much difficulty meeting up with their peer group. These days the season is a more fluid happening consisting of far more than the set-piece events which constituted the strict social season of over 50 years ago. Godfrey Smith in his encyclopaedic book on the subject tells us that in the days of Virginia Woolf, "The London season was over by the first week in June when people of fashion dispersed to their country homes or adjourned to Bath." Today the season is longer—it is not until August that it becomes odd still to be around in London. The landed and aristocratic head for the grouse moors and Scottish hills while the merely moneyed opt for Tuscan villas or Provence.

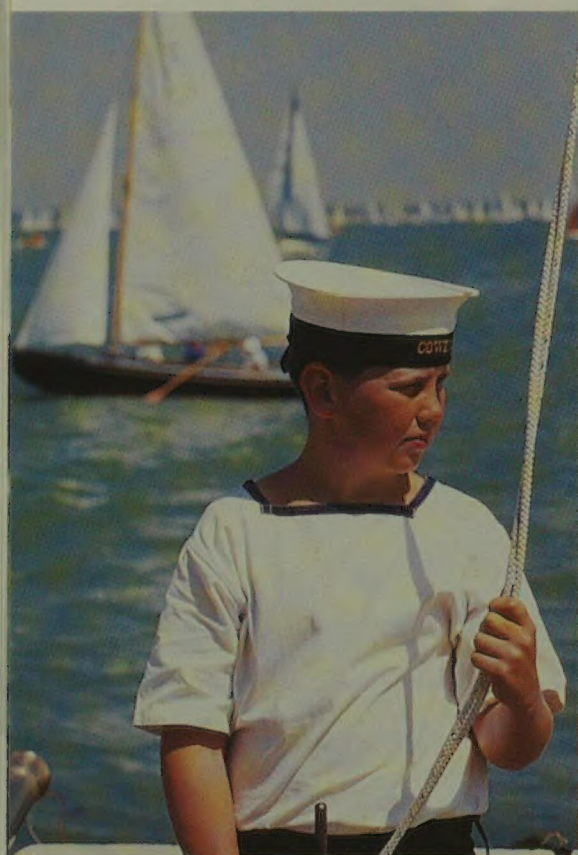
Not only is the season longer, it is also

Above, Ascot offers the chance make a spectacle of oneself and, left, to eat, drink and be merry—be it lunching from a caviar-laden hamper, or with the crowds on the Heath.





The season is proof that a good idea never ages—it lives on and adapts to the changing world;



LEFT: THEODORE WOOD/CAMERA PRESS. ABOVE: DAVID LEVENSON/COLORIFIC.

Top left, Derby Day, Epsom; top right, Glyndebourne Opera, Sussex; above, Cowes Week; and right, Henley Regatta are all important events during the London season.

much more democratic with more and more people each year catching some of the fun. The toffs may head for Ascot, Henley and Wimbledon in their Bentleys and their Rolls Royces, while hoi-polloi travel in their buses and their Hondas, but look across the green-sward and the river and they're having just as good a time. This, admittedly, is not what King George III had in mind in 1780 when he gave his wife Queen Charlotte a birthday party and invited all the prettiest girls in town, but it is proof that a good idea never ages—it lives on and adapts to the changing world.

But the biggest change has been brought about by one of the most fruitful introductions of all—when big business met the once-exclusive world of the season it was love at first sight. The marriage couldn't be happier and the mutual dependency shows every sign of enduring. The world of work brings its financial clout to the union, sponsoring events that might otherwise be financially precarious, while the season offers matchless opportunities to oil the wheels of commerce, to entertain or reward favoured clients and customers.

Businessmen, it seems, are the new debts, though rather less easy on the eye. Wined, dined, lunched and courted all season long, whirling from the rugby match at Twickenham, through the Chelsea Flower Show, the Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy, to Ascot, Wimbledon, Henley and on to the grandest yachts at Cowes. Meanwhile, the daughters of the gentry, around whom the whole thing once revolved, put in the odd

appearance at a few favoured events (mostly the polo on Smith's Lawn) but by and large they have better things to do than tie themselves down in an early marriage—they're plotting boardroom coups, backpacking in Thailand, busy with their law exams or cohabiting with somebody of whom their parents would most definitely disapprove.

But while the life of the sort of "gel" who would once have been a deb has changed beyond peradventure, the main events go on surprisingly little changed in essence. Queen Charlotte's Ball and the Berkeley Dress Show, it is true, are little more than shadows of their former selves, but Badminton, The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, The Chelsea Flower Show, Derby Day, Royal Ascot, Henley and Cowes are all still gloriously themselves. At most of these events the royals, who still provide a focus and a core of fascination, are to be found at their most relaxed, enjoying themselves doing the things they like best. Take Royal Ascot; without the pageantry of royalty, the parade of the carriages, the outriders in their scarlet coats, the gossip about who is wearing what, the obsession with who has been invited to the royal box and who has been humiliatingly excluded from the royal enclosure, it would be a shadow of the occasion it continues to be.

Ascot is an almost perfect paradigm for the best of the season's events; it has all the elements that give the season its buzz and its cachet. There are the opportunities for dressing-up, for establishing social status, for





## surviving all manner of onslaughts.

observing at fairly close quarters a heady combination of royalty, society figures, showbiz stars and Euro-trash. There is serious sport to be watched—Ascot, after all, offers some of the most beautiful horses and the best racing of the year. There is a chance to drink and be merry, to lunch from a champagne and caviar-laden picnic stacked in the back of a Bentley, to eat in one of the grand private boxes or one of the numerous public bars or to picnic with hoi-polloi for less than a tenner on the Heath with a splendid view of the racing. It is both gloriously grand and exceedingly democratic. It is laced with heavy doses of strict social observances and weird eccentricities—a wonderfully English combination. Above all, even though it occurs in high summer, in the middle of the working week, there is an almost tangible air of holiday, as if the whole course is itself *en fête*.

Almost all the main events of the season have a royal with whom they are associated—the Queen and most of the other members of the royal family are associated with Ascot, the Duke and Duchess of Kent with Wimbledon, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Princess Royal with Cowes, the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret with The Chelsea Flower Show, Prince Philip and the Prince of Wales with polo. Much of the charm of the many polo matches is that the royals are often seen at their most informal. At Windsor, the Princess of Wales would watch the young Prince Charles in his playing days, herself often simply clad in the Sloane Ranger's



LEFT AND ABOVE: DAVID LEVISON/COLORIFIC.





LEFT: THODORE WOOD/CAMERA PRESS. BELOW: MARTIN PARR/MAGNUM

standards for entry to the stewards' enclosure are strictly imposed. All this tradition coupled with chaps in their boating blazers and girls in their floaty dresses give Henley a special atmosphere of its own.

Meanwhile, the cultural events of the season proceed at a more stately pace than the more overtly commercialised affairs. Less intricately connected with royalty, more discreetly sponsored by business, their importance in the pecking order changes subtly through the years. The days when people begged, borrowed or stole to get invitations to Glyndebourne seemed to vanish when the new auditorium opened a few years back many of the old Glyndebourne aficionados have now decamped to Garsington. Some of the great and the good still make a point of going to Glyndebourne, where musical standards are still much higher, but there is no doubt that Garsington has that winning combination of slight amateurishness coupled with a raffish charm.

Few people go to all of these events but each has its established place in the hearts of its fans and none looks as if it is anything but alive and flourishing. The demise of the season has been predicted for so long that most social observers have long ago given up taking such doom-mongering seriously. The season has proved itself extraordinarily resilient, surviving all manner of onslaughts and indignities. At the periphery it changes—some events become slightly more or slightly less fashionable, but its core remains gloriously constant. So as we approach the millennium it looks to be in rude good health—somewhat changed but as much fun, though in different ways, as ever it was.

□ Lucia van der Post was, for many years, women's editor of the *Financial Times*, is contributing editor to *How to Spend It* magazine and a freelance journalist.



Above and left, the mix of royalty and socialites has attracted the money of glitzy companies such as Cartier to polo events. Below right, today's debts are more likely to be orchestrating boardroom coups than attending the Queen Charlotte Ball.

## The season is laced with heavy doses of strict social observances and weird eccentricities

uniform of jeans, loafers and a white shirt. The Queen often makes an informal appearance, wandering about as if in her own back garden (which, of course, it is) in her headscarf and tweeds. It is this heady mix of royalty at its most informal, glamorously handsome playboys-cum-polo players, the prettiest of young girls and an international gang of socialites, stars of stage and screen that has attracted the money and attention of glitzy companies such as Cartier, Dunhill and Veuve Clicquot, whose sponsored polo events are now among the most high-profile of the season's events.

At the height of the polo season Smith's Lawn looks as if an Indian durbar is in full swing—vast tents outlined against the greensward, low white picket fences separating one sponsor's guests from another. In the elegant tents, with their interior-decorated tables, their grandly catered lunches and their endless champagne, are valued clients and customers, mixing cheek by jowl with society figures, aristos and showbiz stars. Beyond the picket fences ordinary families come to picnic, to look at the ponies and watch a fantastically exciting game. It is impossible to say

whether Cartier or Dunhill (both of whom stage their immensely smart events at Smith's Lawn) or the quieter, more refined environs of Veuve Clicquot's affair down at Cowdray is the most desired—all one knows is that few people refuse an invitation to any of them.

A few of the events have undoubtedly lost their social cachet, but they remain an intrinsic part of the sporting agenda. Wimbledon, for instance, in spite of its long connection with the Duke and Duchess of Kent, and in spite of the fact that jackets and ties are still essential for those who want to get into the members' enclosure (the chicest place, apart from the small room behind the royal box, to have strawberries for tea), has become largely dominated by big business and sporting fans. Old aristos and glamorous members of the social set are thin on the ground.

The Royal Regatta at Henley, though, retains its allure. Big business is scarcely in evidence (which doesn't mean, of course, that some members of Leander, the rowing club which is to rowing what the MCC is to cricket, don't sometimes have commercial reasons at the back of their invitation list) while dress



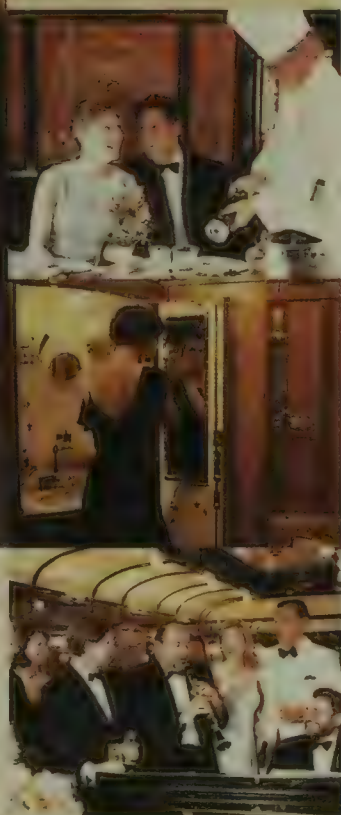
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# BARBADOS

Far beyond its sun-splashed beaches, the Caribbean island of Barbados offers an exquisite experience of warm hospitality with exotic pleasures.

Barbados has it all — a near perfect climate with year-round sunshine, clear blue sea, watersports, cricket, renowned international cuisine, colourful rum cocktails and a fantastic range of accommodation.

But there is more to Barbados than its beaches. The island is endowed with a rich heritage and many sites of historical, cultural and ecological interest. Explore the tropical gardens and a spectacular cave system; visit plantation houses such as St Nicholas Abbey and the island's natural reserves and discover the charming and colourful chattel houses that are dotted across the landscape.

The Barbados National Trust offers an array of tours through the island. Take advantage of the Heritage Passport, an all-inclusive pass offering special access to National Trust attractions, celebrating the culture and wildlife

of Barbados. Visit the Andromeda Botanical Gardens, Tyrol Cot Heritage Village and Gun Hill Signal Station.

The island's customary offerings have a unique British flavour — afternoon tea is served in selected



hotels, and Scotland, Worthing and Hastings are familiar place names.

Barbados and Britain also share in their national passion for sports. Legendary horseracing events such as Derby Day at the Garrison Savannah and the Sandy Lane Gold Cup, draw race-lovers to Barbados from all over the world. The sound

of leather on willow echoing through the Kensington Oval has made Barbados an international cricket capital, hosting many world-class matches. Between September and March, skilled polo players are attracted to tournaments held on the island.

A diverse range of festivals offers activities to suit everyone, whatever the time of year. Music festivals attract prominent names in jazz, opera and musical theatre. The Holder's Opera Season in March, performed in the spectacular gardens of Holder's House, has featured Pavarotti accompanied by the London Philharmonic Orchestra and opera diva, Lesley Garrett. Crop Over in July, dating back to the 18th century, celebrates the end of the sugar cane harvest and invites dancing through the streets to the beat of calypso music. Crop Over has grown to become the highlight of the cultural calendar.

For indulgent relaxation, experience the island's beaches, which offer diverse coastlines shaded by palms or among rugged headlands.

The Platinum Caribbean coast on the west of the island boasts powder-white sands and crystal blue seas with a host of watersports on offer.

The island's east coast, with its

Left, a Barbadian chattel-house.



invigorating air, features rugged headlands, and the Atlantic Ocean produces some of the world's finest waves for surfing.

For exciting nightlife visit the south of the island, where lively clubs, bars

The excellent reputation of Bajan cuisine is displayed in a variety of restaurants. From local bars to exclusive resorts, fresh local ingredients and a variety of fish produce some of the finest dishes. Stores and markets sell fruit such



and restaurants provide entertainment into the early hours. Bridgetown, the capital of Barbados, is a haven for shopping.

The local craft stalls are set among modern duty free shops. A visit to Bridgetown is also an opportunity for sightseeing, either by a catamaran for day cruises, guided tours, deep sea fishing and exploration of the fantastic coral reefs.

Above and left, the Barbadian passion for sport — cricket in Bridgetown and the Sandy Lane Gold Cup.

as papaya, coconut, breadfruit and plantains and display fresh seafood including flying fish, the national speciality. Truly Bajan dishes combine these to offer an array of exotic flavours — a real taste of the Caribbean.

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# Flower shows with a flourish

This June sees the debut of The Regent's Park Flower Show. Monty Don assesses its likely impact on the London gardening scene.



It once lived in a curious no-man's land called De Beauvoir, a part of London which is technically in Hackney, but wants to be in Islington. Just yards beyond its grid of late-Georgian streets was a bleak urban wasteland of windy walkways and tower blocks; yet each year the local horticultural society staged a flower show which fulfilled the most romantic visions of rural England. Plant stalls showed off beautifully grown stock—often quite rare

Flower shows, such as, left, Chelsea and, above, Hampton Court, reflect the current vogue for gardening in Britain.

and specialised. Vegetables competed for size and shape in the most absurdly macho manner. There were classes for sweet peas and early dahlias, chutneys and cakes, miniature gardens by children and some of the best honey I have ever tasted—all the paraphernalia that makes a flower show an event. Not only was it lovely in the most obvious and celebratory way, but it also bound together disparate city dwellers in a spirit unmatched by anything else. All those gardens hidden behind the blank faces of identical houses in identical streets were woven into a patchwork where every individual contribution shone out.

Yet many flower shows are far removed from gardens. Instead, they display horticultural components, taking them to unrivalled levels of excellence. Both amateur and professional growers devote extraordinary amounts

LEFT: ANDREW HILL/REUTERS/CONTOUR; ABOVE: JAMES HAMILTON/REUTERS







Flower shows are like department stores, where visitors like to browse, and Chelsea (above and below) is the Harrods of the horticultural world.



RIGHT: STEWART MARK/ROTA. ABOVE: GILL LALIN/REX

of time, energy and skill in pursuit of the perfect specimen. Invariably they become besotted by one particular species and gain knowledge about it beyond the expectations of any average gardener. This can prove immensely satisfying: it gives the gardener a context within which they can evaluate their own efforts, provides inspiration and offers a satisfying showcase. Visitors browse around shows like department stores, knowing that they could not possibly have all these wonders themselves—nor would they want to.

As interest in domestic gardening grows, so does horticultural window-shopping. So much so that this summer a new flower show launches in Regent's Park, giving Londoners yet another opportunity to lust over prize

blooms and to poach ideas for their pergolas. Strictly speaking this is more a revival than a new event. Regent's Park was originally home to the Royal Botanical Society which used it as the setting for its annual summer show. The Royal Parks—which include Hyde Park, St James's Park and Regent's Park—have a long and expert tradition of horticulture. The Regent's Park show follows on from the huge success of Chelsea, which also nourished the Hampton Court show—taken over by the the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) seven years ago and flourishing ever since.

All of these shows are responding to the current vogue for gardening in Britain—now the country's leading leisure industry—which has itself developed from the seemingly insa-

tiable interest in style and design. As people become more affluent, they are travelling and obtaining inspiration from a wider range of sources. What could be more alluring than adding an outdoor "room" to one's home?

If flower shows are department stores, then Chelsea is the gardening world's Harrods. But despite its reputation, it remains just one of 21 such events annually staged by the RHS, many of which it subsidises. Its site is actually far too small for the number of potential visitors and after 1987, when more than 247,000 attended, entry has been restricted to just 170,000. Despite its role as part of the season, people go to Chelsea in pursuit of horticultural excellence, and to a large extent, they find it. It is at Chelsea that you see the best of any type of plant, the latest in grass cutting equipment, conservatories or garden seats, and, of course, extraordinarily polished garden design.

The latter is a point of much debate. In recent years the 20 or so show gardens— assembled on site a few weeks beforehand and then dismantled—have achieved more publicity than the rest of the show put together. This is a travesty of what the show is about and belittles its range and diversity, especially as, with the odd honourable and exciting exception, few bear any relation to real gardening. What they do demonstrate is breathtaking skill and ingenuity in making a stage set: this is gardening as performance. They also represent quite colossal sums of money. It is not uncommon for £100,000 to be spent on 500sq ft of garden, a figure which does not include sponsorship, discounts and hours of unpaid work by designers and their teams.

Inside the marquee the atmosphere is quite different. And what a tent it is—at three-and-



a-half acres it is said to be the biggest in the world. But this year is to be its last: Sir Simon Hornby, *éminence grise* of the RHS, explains that a new structure is being made for the millennium: "A completely new design, allowing for better displays and improved visitor access and viewing conditions." Under this vast awning, scores of nurseries exhibit their wares, prepared no less carefully than the show gardens, but as an indicator of excellence rather than as finished objects. If there is a criticism of Chelsea it is that it can overpower one's own humble gardening efforts. So much expertise, so many plants, so much money is on display that visitors risk returning to their weeds and chaos feeling dispirited rather than inspired. This can be avoided by going prepared to learn rather than merely to spectate: any visitor to Chelsea should set out equipped with a notebook, pencil and the willingness to ask a lot of questions. The stands are manned by the nurserymen and growers—representing perhaps the world's finest collective assembly of plant expertise. All are approachable and willing to share their knowledge.

It is this spirit of openness that has inspired the introduction of The Regent's Park Flower Show this June. As Mike Blackman, its managing director, is at pains to stress, the key to this new event is accessibility. The setting will be spacious, with easy access for the disabled, and 20 per cent of all tickets will be held back on the door to encourage spur-of-the-moment visits. But most significantly there will be an accent on the show gardens being small and created on a tight budget so that the average visitor may make a direct and relevant comparison with their own town garden.

Among these gardens will be an unusual creation by David Stevens, a world-renowned designer with many Chelsea gold awards to his credit. "Chelsea tends towards the blockbuster, with an increasing use of gimmicks," he says. "At

Regent's Park I want to demonstrate that people need not spend a fortune on a good idea. The emphasis will be on simplicity and innovation." Likewise Caroline Kerr Smith, another Chelsea winner, will be designing a garden that is "interesting to look at, but uses easily manageable planting". Much of her garden's structure will be based on salvaged material such as discarded wood and stone that she is tracking down in London and plans to transport via a boat on the Regent's Canal, which passes through Regent's Park. "Many large items which might be thrown away could be used in a garden—for instance, an old water tank might be used to build a pond."

There is an important shift in emphasis here from the one that has pervaded Chelsea for most of this century (although to be fair to the RHS, one which they are trying to change). Chelsea carries with it the hierarchy of the professional gardener and nurseryman employed by and for the wealthy amateur gardening enthusiast. Often this relationship has proved creative and generous, but it is now the exception rather than the rule something the Hampton Court Flower Show was swift to recognise. The organisers of Regent's Park Flower Show are focusing on this and are aiming themselves at the small urban and suburban garden. Future plans include appealing to the modern appreciation of food—by including vegetables and fruit that will be judged as much by taste as by their visual appearance, something that no flower show has yet had the sense to make standard.

Another key aspect of Regent's Park will be its wildlife theme. In this age of environmental awareness, town gardeners are increasingly aware both of the range of creatures that can be found in the inner city, and the precariousness of their existence. By working with the London Wildlife Trust to highlight conservation, The Royal Parks are being thoroughly modern.

For very good reasons, small children are

not allowed into Chelsea. There is simply insufficient room and their safety would be compromised. But their absence does remove the family element that is so central to most people's enjoyment of a garden: everything becomes rather serious and grown-up. At Regent's Park Flower Show there is to be a crèche, a large children's playground, a picnic area and a "huge number of toilets" which, as anyone who has taken small children to a public event will know only too well, is vital.

Regent's Park will also take a cue from Hampton Court in that all exhibitors will be selling their wares. Indeed, like Hampton Court, Regent's Park is likely to have all the sprawling, relaxed atmosphere of a country fair. Strong arms and sturdy carrier bags will be the order of the day.

It seems to me that Chelsea stands alone. It is special and should always be enjoyed and celebrated as such. But it is too much to expect from it the intimacy and sense of community that I enjoyed so much in the little flower show in Hackney. If The Regent's Park Flower Show can provide this alongside inspiration from the experts, then it will have all the ingredients of a winner.

□ Monty Don's *Urban Jungle* is published by Headline, £19.99. He also hosts Channel 4's *Real Gardens* and is covering Chelsea, Hampton Court and Tatton Park Flower Shows for Channel 4.

### Special Reader Offer

Readers of this magazine are offered a reduced advance adult entry price to The Regent's Park Flower Show of £3.50 (standard price £10, with £12 on the door). Please call the ticket hotline on 0870 90 40 500 and quote Illustrated London News offer. Tickets must be booked by 17 June and are subject to availability.

Left, David Stevens, an award-winning garden designer, will be creating a simple but innovative garden for The Regent's Park Flower Show. Below, the flower show at Regent's Park, 1889.





Italian mezzo-soprano Cecilia Bartoli has had a meteoric rise to superstardom, yet she rarely appears on stage in opera, preferring recitals and recording. Hugh Canning sings her praises.

# Diva with a Difference

**H**ew performing artists outside the world of the cinema and pop music become the subject of a book before they reach their mid-30s. But Cecilia Bartoli, Italian mezzo-soprano, is altogether exceptional. Last year, two volumes appeared, one a breathless biography by two of the singer's fans, expose of the super-egos that comprise contemporary opera's megastardom, although the portrait of Bartoli at its heart is affectionate and astutely judged.

That Bartoli ranks as a "superstar" in music circles is unquestionable. Her name on any playbill guarantees a sell-out. Her recitals at the Wigmore Hall in London are among the hottest tickets in classical music—the hall could sell its 600 seats ten times over, but she has maintained her loyalty to an intimate venue in which the subtleties of her artistry can be appreciated to the full. It must be agony for the box-office: she returns to the Wigmore for a recital in December and thousands will be disappointed.

Luckily, Bartoli has found grateful capacity audiences in Birmingham's 2,000-seat Symphony Hall—whose benign acoustics help her project a voice of only modest size—and Manchester's Bridgewater Hall. Although Britain has yet to see her in a staged opera, this year has brought three chances to see her in concert performances of Handel's *Rinaldo*. In July she makes her debut at the proms.

By then she will have celebrated her 33rd birthday and it is astonishing that this still very young singer has behind her an international career of more than a decade. Bartoli was ear-marked for celebrity from the moment she was discovered in an Italian television talent-spotting programme at age 19. Born in Rome in 1966 to parents who sang professionally at the city's opera, she was predestined to a musical career; her mother named her after the patron saint of music, Santa Cecilia, whose Accademia is one of the Italian capital's most venerable institutions. Hopeful that young Cecilia should follow in their footsteps, Mamma and Pappa Bartoli saw their nine-year-old daughter's early promise confirmed when she was cast as the shepherd-boy in performances of *Tosca*—her only appearance on stage to date in a Puccini opera, a situation that seems unlikely to change.

For Bartoli is a special kind of prima donna. When cast by Decca—at the age of only 21—as the mixnix Rosina in a new recording of Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*—she was unknown to the outside world: those records, if they did not make her a household name, certainly put her on the international map. I remember the astonishment of seasoned seen-it-all, heard-it-all critics, when her voice sprang out of the speakers. How, we all wondered, could such a young singer command such an evenly produced, richly-coloured voice, so apparently effortless a bravura technique, such a bubbly personality and so witty and intuitive an understanding of the subtleties of the opera's text. From the outset of her recording career, Bartoli established herself first and foremost as an artist of exceptional intelligence and musical taste—in short a stylistic paragon. With comparatively little stage experience, from the beginning of her career she staked a claim to the title of Rossini mezzo par excellence, the natural heiress to such great singers as the Spaniards Teresa Berganza and Conchita Supervia, the Italians Gioletta Simonato and Lucia Valentini-Terrani.

One might have expected Bartoli subsequently to storm the world's opera houses as Rosina, later adding Rossini's *La Cenerentola* (Cinderella) and, possibly, his enchanting Isabella, the patriotic Italian lady of his opera *L'Italiana in Algeri*. Many a pundit predicted that, ten

years hence, Cecilia would become the great Carmen *de nos jours*. So far this has yet to happen. Just as Bartoli's voice was prodigiously well-developed, so a wise head sits on her shoulders. From the beginning of her career, she resolved that she would not become a repertoire work-horse, dashing from one international opera house to the next performing the standard mezzo roles. Fortunately, right from an early stage in her career, she was able to pick and choose. She sang Clarice, the charming heroine of Rossini's early comedy, *La Pista del Paragone* (The Touchstone) in Pesaro—a role she has not, alas, recorded—and Cherubino and Dorabella in Mozart's *Figaro* and *Così fan tutte* in Florence's historic Teatro della Pergola.

Cherubino and another randy page boy, Isoler, in Rossini's naughty French comedy, *Le Comte Ory*, have provided her with roles at the Opera-Bastille in Paris and at La Scala, Milan. These have been her only opera appearances to date at these large venues. She has yet to sing at Covent Garden. After what has been an unbearable wait La Bartoli is eagerly anticipated in costume as Euridice in Haydn's rarely staged version of the Orpheus myth, *The Soul of the Philosopher*. This work was actually written for London during one of the great Austrian composer's famous sojourns in the British capital. However, it was never performed in his lifetime, and in fact the world première was staged in 1951 at the Florence Festival with Maria Callas as Euridice. Bartoli goes one better than La Callas—she sings the role of "soul" as well. Happily, further projects are under discussion. "I would love to do Monteverdi's *Poppea* at Covent Garden and perhaps Handel's *Agrippina*..." she hints, with a tantalising smile.

Bartoli is the antithesis of the popular perception of the opera diva, the prima donna assoluta. Her personality is as sparkling as her stage persona: peals of laughter alternate with studied seriousness whenever music is discussed. She lives in the glare of constant publicity—she is probably today's most photographed opera singer yet remains a private person, jealously guarding her free time and enjoying frequent holidays when she is not at her Monte Carlo home. "One of the reasons I do



Italian mezzo-soprano Cecilia Bartoli makes her debut at the proms in July, but this young singer already has behind her an international career of nearly a decade.





Bartoli is a superstar in musical circles—her name on any playbill guarantees a sell-out, but she is the antithesis of the popular perception of an opera diva—her personality is as sparkling as her stage persona.

relatively few performances is that I like to have time for myself. When you have such a demanding career, it is important that you find time to relax, to read and to study new scores—and my family is very important to me,” she says. Family means her mother and her younger sister, Federica, both of whom live in neighbouring apartments in their native Rome. Cecilia’s musician brother whose chamber ensemble accompanied her in certain recitals—died at the age of 31 in 1997 after a long struggle with cancer. The tragedy has brought the women of the Bartoli family even closer. Holding back the tears, she says: “It’s particularly hard for my mother.” This is the woman to whom Cecilia owes so much for her guidance and teaching, and it is touching to see them together. Signora Bartoli always comes to see her daughter in her opera performances, stays in her New York apartment, cooks her wonderful meals and attends to her hair and clothes as she unwinds in the dressing room after a performance.

They were en famille in New York after Bartoli sang Susanna at the Metropolitan Opera in Jonathan Miller’s new production of the *Marriage of Figaro*. It was the day the story broke in the *New York Times* in which Miller attacked her for interpolating what he called “concert arias” into his production after he had left. Bartoli decided to sing the rarely heard arias Mozart wrote for a new prima donna when he first revived *Figaro* in Vienna in 1789. Although most opera houses perform the original 1786 version, it is not unheard of to give the later revision an airing and Bartoli thinks there are sound musical reasons for including them.

“After all, this is Mozart. A video of Miller’s Vienna production of *Figaro* already exists and the staging is near-identical to that of our production at the Met. I thought it would make a nice change for the public to hear these lovely pieces.” This is typical Bartoli. She believes that musical performances should be special occasions—one reason why she restricts her appearances to around 50 a year and chooses only “projects” which interest her.

Despite her serious approach to her work, Bartoli is always laughing—not infrequently at herself. It is no secret that she loves her food: in the flesh she is plumper and prettier than her photos suggest. When I ask why she has yet to appear on stage in some of the “trouser roles”—male parts traditionally sung by a woman—that she has performed on disc, she giggles nervously. “Er...you know...it’s a question for me of the *physique du rôle*. I’m quite short and I have a very...er...feminine body. What can I say?...I’m very Italian!”

This is typical of her commitment to presenting as convincing a performance as possible. She is unique in my experience of mezzo sopranos in welcoming the ascendancy of the star counter-tenors who are stealthily annexing some of the mezzo’s most coveted roles in the world’s top opera houses. And it is for this reason that she is not looking to the *Italian Girl in Algiers* and *Carmen* for her future roles, but to much less familiar corners of the operatic repertory. Last year, the Zurich Opera—her “second home” as she calls it, in Europe—mounted a real collector’s item for her: *Nina*, the woman driven mad by love, by Mozart’s hugely successful contemporary Paisiello.

Despite being one of the most talked-about operas of the late-18th century, musically-speaking this is a thin piece. Characteristically, Bartoli beefed up the title role by interpolating into it one of Mozart’s grandest and most spectacular concert arias. Poor, mad Nina is the psychological grandmother of Donizetti’s Lucia di Lammermoor and Bellini’s Elvira Walton in *Puritani*: Bartoli delivered an unforgettably histrionic performance.

This season too she has shocked and astonished critics and audiences with her highly individual portrayals of Susanna and her first Donna Elvira. Her Susanna was a true child of the Mediterranean servant classes, earthy, robust, and teetering on the cusp of vulgarity, much to the displeasure of some of the New York critics. Meanwhile, her Elvira in Zurich was sung with a vehemence that made one fear for her voice. Bartoli became a whirlwind virago, an avenging angel whose obsession with Don Giovanni was rendered all the more terrifying by the fact that she performed her role—heroically—on crutches. During rehearsals she had fallen on an icy pavement while shopping and broken her ankle. She continued rehearsing and did the first performances in considerable pain—hardly the behaviour of an old-fashioned diva.

Bartoli’s enthusiasm, intelligence and hyper-nuanced musicianship make her so much more than a star. The glamorous pin-up who models Rolex watches for the American glossies is only the surface covering of what the Italians call *una vera artista*—a true artist. Curiously, she is known in her native land as “the singer who is better known abroad”. Slowly but surely that is changing, but we can be glad that she is now making Britain a compulsory stop on her highly selective itinerary.

□ This July, Cecilia Bartoli makes her debut at the Proms in London’s Royal Albert Hall with a mouthwatering programme of Haydn and Mozart led by one of her favourite conductors, Nikolaus Harnoncourt and his period instrument orchestra, Concentus Musicus Wien. I recommend early applications for Prom 2 on Saturday, July 17. In November, at concert performances of Handel’s “Rinaldo” in London and Manchester, she sings the love-torn Almirena, proud owner of the opera’s most famous aria, the hauntingly beautiful “Lascia ch’io pianga” (Let me weep) which Harrods uses in its TV commercials. She will be joined by the star counter-tenor, David Daniels and the stunning Slovak soprano Luba Orgonasova.

□ Hugh Canning is music correspondent for The Sunday Times.







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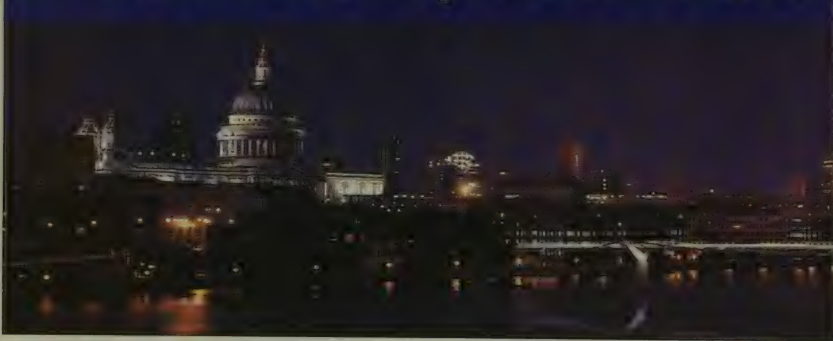
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# London, It's You



**N**o-one is winning more from the National Lottery than Londoners, who are seeing their city transformed. As the capital scores handsomely with all five original disbursements—arts, sports, heritage, charities and the Millennium Commission—awarding buildings are shooting up and older ones are acquiring a fresh lease of life. Never in Britain has so much money been invested in such a range of public buildings in so short a time.

London is emerging with renewed energy, revelling in a cultural dynamism that few other cities can match. The lottery's impact stretches

throughout the capital, from the rejuvenated banks of the Thames to small sports centres in the outer suburbs. The figures alone are mind-boggling. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) list of London projects, as of early this year, ran to nearly 300 grants worth a staggering £350m. And, in addition to the building boom, dozens of parks and public gardens, churchyards and cemeteries are receiving aid in the most massive filip to London's green open spaces since Victorian times.

The Arts Council's Lottery Fund list is shorter but represents the greatest ever single boost to

the performing arts. Payouts include £20m for the Albert Hall, £12m for the Globe, £32m for the National Theatre, £19m for the Royal Court Theatre in Sloane Square, £36m for Sadler's Wells and a monumental £79m for the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. The British Film Institute is receiving £15m for an Imax cinema that has already risen in the middle of Waterloo's little-loved traffic roundabout. Thanks to Lottery largesse, London's great museums, galleries and theatres, will soon be in better shape than for decades.

Indeed, the construction boom is such that



Thanks to lottery money London is presenting a new face to the world, with projects from major new buildings to low-key refurbishments set to take the city into the 21st century. Marcus Binney reports on work in progress



there is already a backlash and we now hear the cry that London is getting more than its fair share of Lottery funds. Government ministers have stated that they want to spread Lottery resources around the country and to shift them from buildings to people. There is talk of putting more funds into deprived areas such as former coal-mining towns; but it needs to be remembered that East London includes some of the poorest borough councils in the country, with needs as great as the North-East, Scotland or Wales. In fact, all the lottery givers have, right from the start, worked determinedly to achieve

a wide geographical spread.

We should take care not to return to the policies of the 70s and 80s, which saw a systematic attempt to bleed London by shifting major institutions to the provinces. In terms of visitor numbers, moving the Royal Armories from the Tower of London to Leeds has been a disaster (this is no insult to Leeds which is booming as never before). Great national collections belong in the capital—though to have offshoots like the Tate in Liverpool is an excellent idea. London deserves a special place, not just as the "first among equals" of British cities, but as the nation's

*Top, an aerial view of how the Bankside Power Station will look when it opens in 2000 as the Tate Gallery of Modern Art.*

*Bottom, the Millennium Bridge—designed by Sir Norman Foster, this daring new single span pedestrian bridge will provide a "blade of light" between St Paul's and Bankside.*





*Above, Arts Council lottery money is funding the British Film Institute's Imax cinema that recently opened in the middle of Waterloo's traffic roundabout.*



*Left, the Royal National Theatre following its makeover, which has given it a more visible entrance.*

*Right, how the turbine hall of Bankside Power Station will look when it is transformed into the Tate Gallery of Modern Art next year.*

capital, with all the pulling power this implies.

One exciting aspect of these lottery projects is the sheer number of first-class architects involved. Twenty years ago, such projects would have been handed to the faceless architects of the Government's Property Services Agency and carried out in lugubrious fashion. Today, Sir Norman Foster leads with the British Museum Great Court and the daring new single span pedestrian bridge across the Thames to Bankside, Jeremy Dixon and Edward Jones are doing the Royal Opera House with BDP, Richard MacCormac is ingeniously winning more space at the Science Museum, while Rick Mather not only has the National Maritime Museum, but also the Wallace Collection and the Dulwich Picture Gallery.

While British architects win numerous competitions on the Continent, the converse was rarely true until the Swiss architects Herzog and De Meuron captured the prize commission for converting mighty Bankside Power Station into the new Tate Gallery of Modern Art—to become far and away the world's largest gallery of 20th-century art. Transforming an older building rather than building a flagship modern

museum incensed some architects but it provides precisely the kind of raw industrial space in which many of today's artists most like to exhibit. Once visitors experience the austere majesty of the former turbine hall, new interest should be sparked in Battersea Power Station. Contemporary arts have already received a further boost with a £3m Arts Council lottery grant towards the transformation of the much-loved Serpentine Gallery in Hyde Park, improving security and air conditioning to the standards now needed to secure first-class loan exhibitions.

The Arts Council has received heavy flak for its large projects, notably the Royal Opera House and the now-shelved £150m scheme for revamping the South Bank arts complex with a spectacular wave roof by Lord Rogers sailing over the Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Hayward Gallery. Yet an overwhelming percentage of its money has gone not on Paris-style *grands projets* which risk becoming white elephants, but on carrying out desperately needed improvements to existing venues, making them infinitely more pleasant to use, and in providing back-of-house facilities that will transform their whole operation.

The National Theatre had a brilliant makeover by architects Stanton Williams, hotly contested at the outset by the original designer Sir Denys Lasdun. The result, a compromise brokered between the warring factions, is a good one; so good that most patrons are barely conscious that the alterations have been made. For years, theatre-goers had complained that the National lacked a visible main entrance. The architects have now provided one by building boldly out over the road which once turned the building into a traffic island and restricted entry to a small, confusing vestibule. With much improved internal lighting showing its powerful architecture to advantage, the National is now a delight to visit, with smart, spacious bars at every level. Cast an eye up at the deep concrete coffers of the ceilings to spot the zigzag line which shows the position of the original walls.

Similar improvements are being made to theatres elsewhere in the capital. Many of London's playhouses were built by private entrepreneurs, and the space allocated to foyers, staircases and bars is much smaller than, say, on the Continent, where proud city fathers have provided opera houses and theatres with vast staircases and grand salons. Doubtless the former adds to the intimate atmosphere, but it can severely cramp the staging and actors' style.

The Albert Hall, too, will benefit from some behind-the-scenes improvements. The building, which opened in 1871, was intended to be "the finest for seeing, hearing and convenience"—but it has suffered grievously from the lack of a back door. All catering deliveries and refuse collection had to be done through public areas. Now, with £40m from the Arts Council and the HLF, all services have been removed to the basement, with a new low-level access point under the south steps. Meanwhile, the badly decayed terraces on the south side of the hall and the memorial to the Great Exhibition of 1851 will be restored, neatly deflecting the eye from the new service entrance.

The lottery is also enabling London's museums to open up their collections and to create dramatic presentations. At the Science Museum, where there is little space left for





Tate Gallery of Modern Art

Sculpture Display

Exhibition Galleries

Concourse

Level 3

Bankside

Collection Displays

Tate Shop





expansion, Richard MacCormac has ingeniously slung a 450-seat Imax cinema and three floors of exhibition space on similar steel structures to those in the Pompidou Centre in Paris. Meanwhile, the architect Chris Wilkinson has designed for the museum's atrium a gravity-defying glass bridge of laminated glass planks suspended from hundreds of cobalt steel wires no more than a sixteenth of an inch thick (which he calls "guitar strings"). As people move across the bridge a fibre optics system changes the colour of the glass to show the stresses placed on the structure. "Our mandate has always been to look at the present and future as well as the past," says the director Sir Neil Cossons.

But all eyes, naturally, are on the exciting new structures that are taking shape throughout London. First among these, its lottery application having been hot off the starting block, was the £48m Sadler's Wells Theatre. Since the sleek brick building opened last autumn, it has provided dance with a custom-built space in London. The foyer has an all-glass front which should put the audience on show during the interval as they spill out into the bars at different levels, conveying the buzz of a good performance to every passer-by. Alas, the architects have missed a trick, by placing a large video screen in front of the balconies which largely conceals the animated throng behind.

One of my favourite lottery projects is the extension by Nigel Coates to the Geffrye Museum in East London, a helter-skelter of plunging steel and crazy brickwork in absolute contrast to the serene beauty of the Queen Anne almshouses in which the museum was established. Coates' addition continues the museum's "walk through time" (an enchanting series of period rooms) into the 20th century with Golders Green Edwardian, the International Modern of the 30s, the G-plan of the 50s, and the fashionable loft-living of today. Behind the almshouses a delightful series of garden rooms have been created, portraying the evolution of the town-house

The remodelling of the Royal Opera House is by far one of the most controversial lottery projects. Above, a computer generated image of the view within the auditorium.

Right, a computer generated image of the evening view from within the Floral Hall at the Opera House.



garden over five centuries. Coates drove the London brickies mad by insisting that all the bricks should be laid on a slant. Outside he dispenses with rainwater pipes in favour of clusters of chains—which form instant water-features as soon as it rains.

At another early lottery winner, the National Maritime Museum, a £20m refit has replaced the annoying back entrance with a truly grand approach where glass walls on either side of the portico reveal a huge, slowly-rotating ship's propeller and a flashing lighthouse-lantern. By throwing a vast glass roof over the great Neptune Court, the architects, Rick Mather and BDP, have at last provided space for the awe inspiringly large exhibits a maritime museum needs—the restored stern of a Trafalgar-era ship, *HMS Implacable*, the sails of Robin Knox-Johnston's

1960s round-the-world yacht, and a flaming tower proclaiming the importance of fossil fuels. Visitors steer Viking boats and SeaCat ferries, load cargoes and explore the sunken wreck of the *Titanic*.

Looking to the projects which are coming on stream, by far the most controversial is the remodelling of the Royal Opera House. Whatever criticisms may be levelled at the management, the building itself should be spectacular: it will certainly be the equal of any opera house in the world. With a whole city block placed at their disposal, the architects have been able to create backstage areas lofty enough for jetliners. Here, a uniform clear height of 11 metres allows large-built scenery for six different productions to be immediately available on site, while huge sliding doors, weighing 70 tons apiece, provide total





*Above, a vast glass roof covers Neptune Court to provide space for large exhibits at the redesigned National Maritime Museum.*



*Left, Sadler's Wells Theatre with its all-glass front is just one of the exciting new structures in London—but the video screen (right) obscures the animated throng of the audience at interval.*

acoustic separation. This will enable construction of scenery or rehearsals for three different productions to be carried out simultaneously. The words Covent Garden stand for the adjacent former flower market as much as for the Opera, and the flavour of both has been combined by reproducing the beautiful iron and glass barrel roof of the old Floral Hall as the main foyer. An equally spacious area will be provided for those who sit upstairs in "the gods" with spectacular views from a rooftop pergola overlooking the piazza. Indeed it is the purchasers of the cheapest seats who stand to enjoy the biggest gains from the new design. A pair of dramatically long escalators connect with the amphitheatre bar; half way up you have the thrill of bursting through the roof and seeing the Crystal Palace-style



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summit of the Floral Hall glowing from within.

Equally impressive should be Sir Norman Foster's new British Museum. Here, nearly half of the building's total space has been released by moving the contents of the famous Round Reading Room to the new British Library on Euston Road. The whole of the palatial Great Court has been freed of bookstacks and is to be given a gently arching glass roof which will become the focus of the museum, open from early in the morning till late at night—which any member of the public can use to take a pleasant short cut between the building's north and south wings. Foster's greatest strength has long been his exhilarating use of natural light. Here, shafts of sun will alternate dramatically with the shadows of fast-scudding clouds playing across the walls and floor. The temptation will be to keep Sir Norman's airy and spacious hall free of clutter, but I for one feel it should be taken as an opportunity to display large-scale sculpture from the collection—as has been done so brilliantly in the roofed-over courts at the Louvre. The British Museum could make use of its great collection of casts, now largely unseen. Not only do these have an increased value as many of the originals are now difficult to visit or badly deteriorated, but they also represent civilizations of which the museum has fewer original works, such as Mexico and East Asia, making it potentially the world's most comprehensive display of its kind.

It is thanks to the lottery that the capital's longest running preservation battle has been brought to a triumphant conclusion. For years, the great courtyard of Somerset House, London's most handsome Georgian public building, has been insultingly used as a car park for civil servants. Now the Lord Chancellor's Department is moving out, and the people will at last gain the freedom of the glorious classical architecture of Sir William Chambers (the match for any square in Bath or Edinburgh, and a stand-in for St Petersburg in a recent Bond film). Open air concerts will be held in the summer while the stupendous gallery running the length of river front will serve as the new home of the Gilbert Collection, an astonishing array of gold, silver and mosaics, assembled by an Englishman living in California.

On a smaller, and more suitably discreet scale, the Wallace Collection is to benefit to the tune of £7m from the IHLF. This magnificent town house, often described as London's best kept secret for its pleasantly crowd-free galleries, houses a staggeringly rich collection of French furniture, decorative art and paintings. As from next year it will also boast a new sculpture garden, lecture theatre, library, café and new galleries for watercolours, miniatures and temporary exhibitions, opening up the basement and courtyard of Hertford House for the first time.

Two even lower-key projects have been landed by the architects Robert Sprosen. The first is the Tabernacle in Notting Hill, which with high court judge Sir Robert Carnwath as chairman, and £3m from the Arts Council, has become a thriving community arts centre and a focus for the famous Notting Hill Carnival. The second is the Kensington and Chelsea Community Transport Building ingeniously making use of the previously scary space beneath the fast moving traffic along the Westway.



*Above, the British Museum's Great Court with its new glass roof, could display sculpture. Right, a green bridge will carry Mile End Park across a road as part of plans to revive the area. Far right, everything is on the tilt in the helter skelter new extension at the Geffrye Museum.*

The lottery is also playing a key role in regenerating derelict stretches of urban wasteland. On the South Bank, Southwark Cathedral, hemmed in by roads and railways, had been in decline since the Reformation. A Priory church until its elevation in 1905, it was actually threatened with demolition when old London Bridge was replaced further upstream in the last century, but saved by public outcry. Now a cathedral precinct is being reinstated. A new building in Clipsham stone complete with buttresses (and a steep roof clad in Westmoreland slates) will revive the memory of its monastic origins. New cathedral steps down to the river will heighten the layering of history.

Richard Griffiths, the architects responsible, are also working on St Leonards, Shoreditch, a fine early-Georgian church of 1735 in an area of poverty which a visionary vicar is transforming into a community focus with a nursery and drop-in centre for the homeless. The church is already lit spectacularly at night and the splendid six-foot-high cast iron railings, as chunky as those around St Paul's Cathedral, removed at the beginning of World War II, are being replaced. The project has inspired the renaissance of the remarkable baroque church of St Luke's, Old Street, in Islington, which was scandalously unroofed by the Church Commissioners after it was made redundant in 1960. Now the Arts



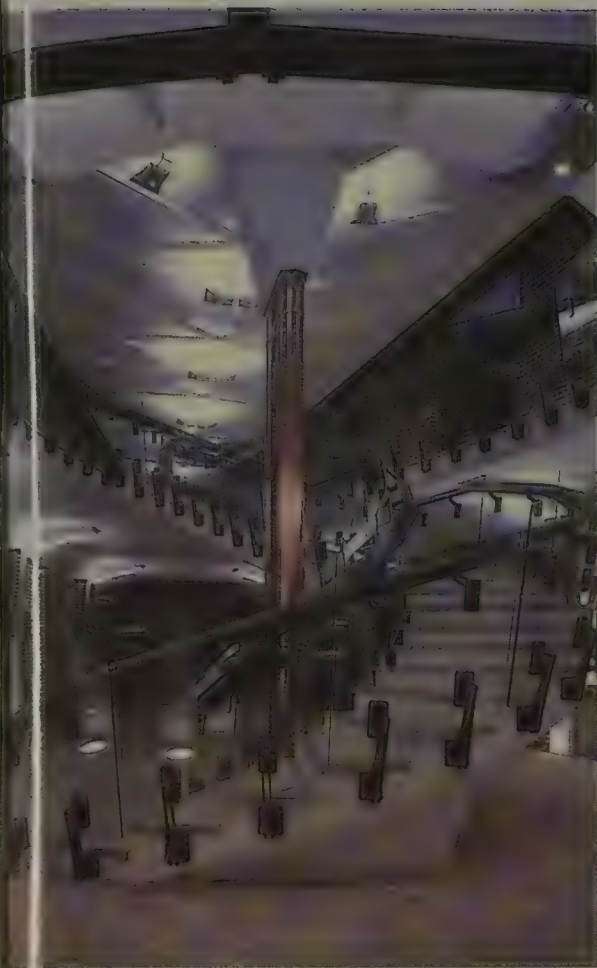
Council is providing £4m for the London Symphony Orchestra to restore it as a rehearsal hall and music education centre.

Further east, the architect Piers Gough, whose practice repeatedly produces some of London's most original and provocative new buildings, has designed a 25-metre green bridge to carry Mile End park across a road (with shops underneath to provide revenue for its upkeep). Once in steady decline, the area will now be revived with an art park, a garden of the senses, swimming pool, tennis courts and football facilities.

Among other gardens being restored are the 1930s Well Hall Pleasance in Greenwich, where waterfalls, pools and fountains had fallen

LEFT: COMPUTER GENERATED IMAGE BY FOSTER AND PARTNERS. RIGHT: THE GEFFRYE MUSEUM. BELOW: ANDREW PUTLER





into disrepair. Also being restored is the dilapidated walled garden by the great Arts and Crafts architect CFA Voysey at Emslie Horniman Park in Kensington, while its vanished bridge and pergola are being reinstated.

The lottery is providing us effectively with two new bridges across the Thames. Sir Norman Foster's new pedestrian span connecting to the new Tate at Bankside will cross one of the widest stretches of the river in a single giant leap. It is intended as a thrilling sensation, recalling the deck of an ocean liner high above the water, but some, walking alone towards a solitary stranger, may instead find it rather unnerving.

Foster's minimalist elegance will be a fascinating contrast to the radical transformation of the ghastly walkway along Hungerford Railway Bridge. Tens of thousands of Londoners run this gauntlet every day, besieged by requests for their small change. Under the plans of architects Lifschutz Davidson the river crossing will lose its railway grime and become as festive as a regatta. Pylons will be built out from the caissons of the existing railway bridge, allowing new walkways to be suspended in mid-air seven metres out over the water. The first, providing wonderful new views upriver to the Houses of Parliament, will be completed next year. When the second is in place it will be possible to walk under the railway tracks from one to the other, observing in midstream one of the piers built by the great engineer Brunel to carry the original chain bridge across the river at that point. "We hope to raise funds for a display of Brunel's work here," adds Lifschutz.

For sport, the biggest project by far will be the new 90,000 seater National Stadium at Wembley. Sir Norman Foster won the prized commission with a design that turns the hallowed turf through 90 degrees. Under a deal completed this spring the Football Association has acquired the existing 80,000-seater Wembley Stadium for £106m (with funds from the Sports Council) and will now raise £200m in commercial loans to pay for a new one. Bob Stubbs, chief executive of Wembley National Stadium, explains: "There are two basic problems. The present sightlines from the lower terraces are too shallow for people to see properly, and where people used to stand at the ends, the new seats are simply too cramped. We also need major improvements to back-of-house facilities—the toilets are a disgrace".

As major undertakings such as this get underway, there is a growing reluctance on behalf of the disbursors to fund further multi-million pound projects. A "small is beautiful" policy is increasingly evident, with money going to projects worth less than a million pounds, or certainly less than five.

There is sense in this, but we still need to keep the Big Bang projects flowing. Let us hope that the Government has the sense to continue to fund buildings that fire the public imagination and that we do not, 50 years hence, look back on the millennium as a "golden era" of patronage that subsequently lost its momentum.

□ Marcus Binney is architecture correspondent of *The Times*.

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# OVERS AND OUT?

Britain is the venue for this summer's cricket World Cup—with a worldwide audience of 434 million. Can the English game rise to the occasion? Former England bowler Mike Selvey assesses the state of play.

**T**he Australians have always had an incisive wit. When the England cricket team, on a sojourn Down Under last winter, were considering bulk shipments of Prozac as an alternative to more practice, a newspaper advertisement for the local version of the Tote thrust the dagger in further. "Do Something No-one Has Done For Years", it ran, "Bet On The Poms". Harsh, yes, but fair. Now is not a good time to be an optimist if you are a follower of cricket in this country.

The matches in Australia, during which our national side had hoped to cast off their traditional mantle as the easy target for stand-up comics, ended once more in defeat, albeit against the best Test side on the planet. The following one-day series, that for a while promised redemption, proved another false dawn: not at all the precursor to an open-top bus ride down The Mall and ticker-tape welcome in the City. Meanwhile, at the junior and grass-roots level, the game is fighting to keep its head above water, with schools reluctant to include it in their sporting curriculum, the intolerable laying waste of playing fields, a lack of success at the highest levels to encourage aspirants, and the seduction of soccer and its ferocious media-fuelled marketing machine. Cricket's authorities, who are not blind to the problems, are pushing hard, with coaching initiatives, and, for example, shortened simpler forms of the game introduced at primary school level. It is a start. But it is still a struggle and always will be. The day English cricket is no longer in crisis there will be lap dancing in the Lord's pavilion.

Competition for the attention of the next generation is fierce. If they are to be attracted to a sport, children need role models: people and teams whose success they can emulate. If one doubts the effect of complacency,

*Opposite, the £27,000 glittering prize: the ICC 1999 World Cup Trophy, for which the top cricketing nations will do battle this summer in venues all around Britain. This year's competition will include such big hitters as, left to right, England's Alec Stewart, Australia's Mark Waugh, the West Indies' Brian Lara, and Hansie Cronje of South Africa.*





PHOTOGRAPHS: ALLSPORT

South Africa will be hoping for this flying form from Jonty Rhodes, above, during this year's World Cup; while England captain Alec Stewart, modelling the new World Cup strip, will want more than just style from his team.

then look no further than the Caribbean where once cricket was the binding force of a disparate region. The West Indies—which exists only as a cricket team—for two decades supported the most invincible sides ever to take the field. Its pre-eminence has now been destroyed by a lack of development strategy and investment, the influx once again of soccer and the lure of wealthy sporting heroes on American satellite channels, which beam wall-to-wall basketball into the region. When England and the West Indies were in Kingston last year for the start of an important series, it was the Reggae Boyz, the Jamaican national soccer team, who hogged the headlines. Success is a catalyst. If Tim Henman wins Wimbledon, then parks and playgrounds will resound to the plunk of tennis balls. And if—let's dream—the England cricket team became the best side in the world, then the task of the game's administrators and marketeers would ease overnight.

The importance of the cricket World Cup being held here this summer cannot be overstated. This is the game's shop window, held every four years or thereabouts, and the only occasion when all the top cricket nations—and a few lesser lights besides—compete against one another in a single competition. From May 14, when England play the current champions Sri Lanka at Lord's in the first of the preliminary games, to the final, also at Lord's, on June 20, the focus of the world's cricket fans will be on grounds from Hove to Edinburgh, and Cardiff to Chelmsford, with visits to Dublin and Amsterdam thrown in. The matches, involving 12 sides (increased over the years from the original eight), will be broadcast to an estimated 434 million people in 100 countries. It must be a success.

This is the premier competition in world cricket, a marketing dream that ought to sell itself. But even by the end of March it was receiving limited publicity and in financial terms looked as if it would be a less than over-



whelming success. Although Pepsi, NatWest, Vodafone and Emirates airline were on board, and virtual advertising, tailored to individual countries taking the telecasts, had been sold, there was still a shortfall in the projected number of main sponsors. This will bring a wry smile to those on the subcontinent and Australasia who wrested the event from England and made a commercial success of the last three competitions. It is a sour comment on the marketing value of cricket in the UK. For the growth of the game here, the targeting of the advertising campaign is crucial. Surveys suggest that the average age of cricket watchers in the UK is around 45 and everything has been geared to reducing that figure.

Winning the World Cup lends global respect in a way that winning a Test series—with its lack of a championship—cannot do. In the six competitions since the first in 1975,

there have been five different holders, with the West Indies taking the first two, and then successively India, Australia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Of these last three, Australia's win in Calcutta is credited with kick-starting the surge to the team's current level of excellence. Meanwhile Pakistan's victory over England at a floodlit Melbourne Cricket Ground, on the back of Imran Khan's famous "cornered tigers" speech, and that of Sri Lanka in Lahore, all led to vast upsurges of interest in the game in the winning countries. This is now paying dividends in the number of young players coming up through the ranks.

Experience and attitude play a huge part. In the successful countries, the shortened form of the game is regarded as parallel to Test cricket, rather than an inferior version of "the real thing", an attitude that long held England back. In Lahore, Melbourne and Colombo, one-day matches generate massive income. If at times there seems a danger of overkill (and the limited-overs game is rather like eating candyfloss), unquestionably Test cricket feeds off it in terms of finance. Crowds—and potential recruits—are attracted by the frenetic nature and the spectacle. Lack of experience in one-day cricket has cost England dear and they are still struggling to catch up, recognising that the game, while based on fundamentals, requires skills that might not sit comfortably with the more traditional form of cricket. Rate of scoring is more important than a batting average, while for bowlers, economy is the watchword.

This is not to say that Test cricketers do not succeed in "limited-overs" games. These matches

require extroverts, gamblers by nature who know when to hold 'em and when to fold 'em, captains who think on the hoof rather than develop long-term strategies, batsmen with flair and the capacity to improvise a theme from a traditional melody, bowlers with variety and the trickery to disrupt the rhythm of violent strokeplay, and fielding that transcends anything seen in England's game hitherto. Watch, for example, the dynamism of the South African Jonty Rhodes, possibly the finest fielder the game has ever seen, or the predatory nature of the Australian Ricky Ponting. This type of play, regarded as exceptional in the early competitions, has now become routine.

It remains the great players, the ones with skill backed by versatility, who dominate with bat and ball. Few of the great innings in World Cup history have been played by bit





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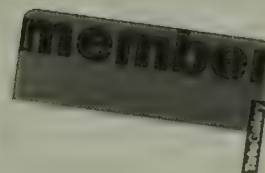


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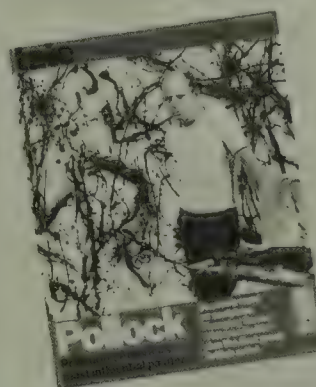
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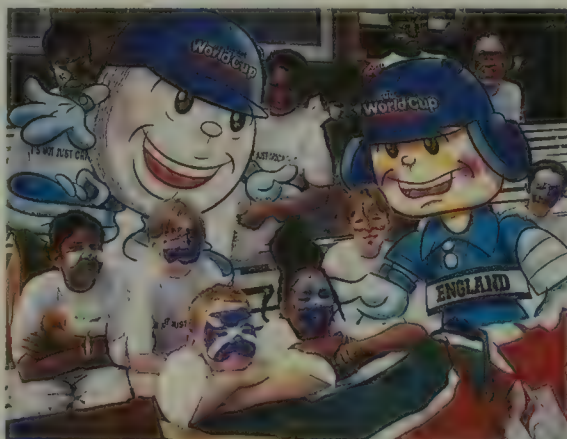
players. Instead we are talking Clive Lloyd and Viv Richards of the West Indies, India's Kapil Dev and Sachin Tendulkar, Graham Gooch of England and Aravinda de Silva from Sri Lanka. Lloyd and Richards, Dev and Gooch have long gone, of course, but not so the others. Tendulkar, indisputably the finest, and wealthiest, batsman on earth, will anchor the Indian innings with brilliant technique allied to outrageous confidence, while de Silva and Sanath Jayasuriya will be attempting to repeat the devastation of the last World Cup when opening bowlers scarcely knew what had hit them. Lara remains the West Indies' trump card, Mark Waugh is Australia's most complete limited-overs batsman and Hansie Cronje is the South African belt and braces. England are relying on some old sweats—Stewart, Neil Fairbrother, Graham Thorpe—rather than new talent, although eyes will be on the progress of Andy Flintoff, the burly young Lancashire all-rounder.

Perhaps this will be a tournament in which the ball dominates the bat. In the last competition, the easy-paced, true nature of pitches meant that bowlers had it tough. But this will be England in May and early June when the pitches will still be cold and clammy after a winter of rain. One groundsman noted that even with fair weather for two full months before the competition he would struggle to get rid of moisture, so high was the water table. And moisture means seamers. As does the white ball which, because of the different surface treatment used to maintain its colour and the dye in the seam which encourages it to swell, can provide extravagant help. Away from the genius of Shane Warne and the Sri Lankan Muttiah Muralitharan, it is hard to see spinners having undue influence. Rather this will be a competition dominated by the likes of Glenn McGrath and, depending on how quickly they can adjust their natural hardwicket length, his Australian compatriots, plus the South Africans Allan Donald and Shaun Pollock. The Indian Javagal Srinath and English and New Zealand medium-pacers, backed up by all-rounders, will make rapacious batting a hazardous business. Scores will generally be lower than in the last competition. In particular, the role of the



PHOTOGRAPH BY PATRICK MCGRAW PHOTOGRAPH BY

The World Cup is showtime for cricket as the game battles to attract the next generation.



"pinch hitter", that bludgeoning batsman sent in at the start of an innings specifically to take advantage of the fielding restrictions—just two men outside a 30-yard circle and a minimum of two close catchers, during the first 15 of the 50 overs per innings—will be blunted. Sides attempting to emulate the devastating starts made by Sri Lanka on the slow subcontinental pitches in 1996 could well find themselves in trouble at 20 for four instead. A different, more stealthy traditional approach could be the norm, where innings are first consolidated and then expanded upon.

If the World Cup lends credibility to the winners, then there is still the delicious opportunity for some of the lesser cricketing countries to thrust a spanner into the works. With

nine full members of the International Cricket Council—that is to say those countries who play Test matches—automatically qualified, the chance is there for three more participants from those nations who have qualified for Associate Membership through a special ICC trophy. Since the cup's inception, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe (both now Test countries, of course), East Africa, and Canada have competed. In the last tournament, Kenya, Holland and the United Arab Emirates took part. This time around it will be Bangladesh—who are not far from becoming the tenth Test nation—Kenya once again and Scotland. Giant-killing is rare—seen on perhaps three occasions in all—and such matches tend instead to provide cameos, diversions from the main event. Such a moment came when Emirates captain Sultan Zarawani, a racy fellow more noted for his yellow Ferrari than his prowess on the pitch, faced Allan Donald without his batting helmet. The man who is arguably the world's fastest bowler proved too much for the flamboyant Pakistani, the ball clattering off his cranium before he blinked.

The West Indies, however, will not be taking lightly their games against Bangladesh in Dublin, or against Scotland in Edinburgh. Three years ago, in Pune, Kenya brought about one of the biggest upsets in cricket history beating Richie Richardson's team by 73 runs. An embarrassment for the West Indies, a triumph for Kenya and Kenyan cricket: this provided the tournament's most memorable moment. The West Indies had already lost both openers, and, asked to make just 167 to win, were looking to Lara to see them home. Lara had made just 8 however, when edging a delivery from pace bowler Rajab Ali, the ball flew towards tubby Tariq Iqbal, a stereotype of the hapless club wicketkeeper who could not have caught the last bus home. Iqbal's life flashed before him as the ball homed in. Catch it and Kenya had a chance of glory. Miss it though, as he had done just about everything else, and he would be vilified as the man who dropped Lara and chucked a game. His eyes grew wide in fright before the ball disappeared somewhere into his substantial nether regions from whence, after some frantic grappling, he managed to extricate it. In that split second, Iqbal became a national hero, mobbed by his team mates and fêted for months. The West Indies did reach the semi-finals, but never truly recovered. One can only hope that equally delicious moments await in England this summer □



ALEX SPOT

Left, a headache for Sultan Zarawani of the United Arab Emirates. A similar ailment faces cricket as a whole as it struggles to attract the support and talents of the next generation, top and above, against stiff competition from more popular sports such as soccer.



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# City of Wine

Vinopolis opens in July and to mark the occasion Andrew Jefford uncorks the vinous history of London, arguably the world capital of wine.

I must have looked grimly unpromising at first, like the sinister London underbelly glimpsed in Conan Doyle's darker Sherlock Holmes tales, or the filthy, monochrome city imagined by David Lynch for *Elephant Man*. Wine merchant Duncan Vaughan-Arbuckle, though, managed to translate the experience of wandering through gloomy acres of arches on the Bankside approach to Cannon Street into something altogether more visionary. Howard Carter, say, peering for the first time into Tutankhamen's tomb, or Schliemann looking down on what he thought was the golden mask of Agamemnon. Vaughan-Arbuckle saw Bordeaux-on-Thames: he saw Barossa-by-Bankside; he saw 500,000 people a year learning, happily, about wine.

The embodiment of his vision opens in July, and it is called Vinopolis. This "city of wine" occupies 100,000 square feet of vaults over which suburban railway trains roll with characteristic indolence. It has been described as a theme park of wine, though the fact that it will be an adults-only attraction means that the approach will be a little more grown-up than that analogy might suggest.

When it opens, you will be able to tour the halls of a multimedia museum called The Wine Odyssey. Visitors will receive information from an audio-guide headset, while the physical exhibition will provide a more interactive style of fun. Sitting on a Vespa scooter in the Italian hall, for example, touring wine regions via a video display on the windshield; or skimming over Australia's windclans in a flight simulator.

Germany, struggling with the disastrous image-decline brought about by selling Britons lots of cheap Liebfraumilch, becomes a sci-fi "Rivers of Riesling" zone. There will also be ample opportunity to taste wine in any of the four restaurants and the £10 entry fee

entitles each visitor to five free samples of wine valued at £5 and over.

Managing director Tony Hodges boasts that Vinopolis will offer more wines by the glass than anywhere else in Europe, including a large range of Champagnes. There will be shopping, too, of course: Majestic will install a major store there, with free delivery to any mainland British address. From September, you will be able to wander around an art gallery featuring contemporary paintings from the collection of California-based wine producer Donald Hess, plus other exhibitions appearing on rotation.

This major project has required £18m in capital, and the money has come from a variety of sources including £2m from Scandinavian venture capitalists Smedvig, and investment from a number of high-profile British wine figures, including Christie's wine authority Michael Broadbent, author Hugh Johnson and chef Michel Roux.

Will it work? It is not, truthfully, in a pretty part of town: Southwark's riverside is improving—slowly. The proximity of the Globe Theatre should help, at least in summer, and the projected Millennium Bridge across the Thames connecting Bankside to the City will make a pleasant pedestrian alternative to traffic-laden Southwark and London Bridges.

Once trains are serving the Jubilee line Bankside station, once the Tate Gallery has opened its powers-station doors, and once scruffy old Borough Market has become an elegant shopping mall, then Vinopolis should assume the status of one of London's leading tourist attractions, especially for the 13.5 million tourists who visit the city each year according to children.

It is astonishing to think how much wine history has unfolded within a cork's arc of Bankside. Young Samuel Pepys, for example, walked on the evening of April 10, 1663

through the front doors of the Royal Oak Tavern just across the river in Lombard Street. He was in the mood for a drink, having forsworn it entirely three weeks earlier; there is, of course, nothing like a little abstinence to sharpen the appetite. He drank, with his literary lawyer friend Alexander Brome, a new discovery which he recorded as "Ho Bryan [Haut-Brion]. A sort of French wine," he wrote, "that hath a good and most particular taste that I ever met with." That phrase is, so far as I know, neither engraved nor painted anywhere in London's Vinners Hall (though you can read on the ceiling, as you slide down into your chair with a glass of port. *Pinus edulantis amantem*). Perhaps it should be. Not only does it mark a crossing point between the lost wine world of antiquity (with its butts, pipes and tuns) and the modern wine world of names, locations and brands, but Pepys' phrase also testifies, casually and nonchalantly, to a truth still valid today: that London is the navel of the wine world.

Arnaud de Pontac was the man who first took the pains to produce fine wine at Château Haut-Brion. When he decided to push for a price commensurate to the money and labour he had invested in the vineyards, he chose not Paris, nor Amsterdam, but London. Indeed the relationship was cemented three years later when Arnaud sent his son François-Auguste to the city, which by then had been traumatised by plague and fire. For the consolation of its surviving citizens, François-Auguste opened a tavern of no more than ordinary luxury, under the sign of "Pontack's Head", tucked away behind the Old Bailey. This was London's first true restaurant, and what after vat of "Ho Bryan" would certainly have been drunk there.

The reasons for London's centrality to the wine trade range from the evident to the inexplicable. Let's start with the former. Britain's





Vinopolis, left, will contain interactive areas such as Sensibilia, above, where visitors can learn the art of tasting wine with the nose—a skill that is familiar to Serena Sutcliffe MW, below, head of Sotheby's wine department.

geographical position within Europe, as the most populous and prosperous nation entirely unable to produce substantial quantities of good wine for itself, has meant that it has always been an attractive market for its wine-producing neighbours, particularly France, Spain and Portugal. You can read back further than Pepys to Chaucer, the well-travelled 14th-century poet, to find references to (and even tasting notes for) the sherries we still enjoy today; indeed Chaucer's own father was a London vintner.

Nowadays, of course, the wine world extends well beyond Europe's frontiers, yet every exporting nation still sets its sights on London when it wants to conquer foreign markets. This is like deciding to learn a second language and picking Mandarin; no wine market is more difficult or more competitive than the British. Yet wine producers recognise that success in the British market is a badge of honour in its own right. Implicitly, too, it is a recognition that Britain's ordinary drinkers are among the most knowledgeable and least parochial to be found anywhere, and that our wine trade is exceptionally skilled and

acute. The fact that the British Master of Wine qualification has now achieved international status, with candidates sitting and passing this remarkably tough degree-level examination in centres around the world, underlines London's primacy.

It is easy for consumers to take all of this for granted. It does not seem unusual to visit the nearest branch of Oddbins or Wine Rack and choose between a bottle of Bordeaux, a Malbec from Argentina, maybe a Château Musar from the Lebanon or a Cabernet from Australia's Margaret River. Wine consumers and producers from other countries, though, are often incredulous at the range and variety of wine available to us in Britain (and, by the way, at the number of people making a living by writing about wine).

This, perhaps, is where the matter begins to grow inexplicable. Quite why wine and its culture should be so dear to us, a nation notorious for its neglectful approach to sensual matters, is hard to say. We are a beer-brewing country—yet wine has now overtaken beer in home-consumption terms. Indifferent wine is often served with good food in France, Spain and Italy; we have always preferred good wine with our indifferent food.

My own theory is that our climate accounts for much. I have travelled widely, and drunk wine wherever I have rested long enough for a meal, yet wine rarely seems to taste as good elsewhere as it does in Britain; indeed in some climates it often tastes bizarre and unpleasant. Port tastes far better in London than it does next to the vineyard where it began life in the Douro valley, as the producers themselves confirm; I have been struck by the same phenomenon with many other wines, too, particularly big reds built by hot summers. There is something about our cool, damp, but fundamentally temperate, climate which seems to beckon and nourish wine. Maybe, too, there is something about the curious, yet patient, British temperament which is ideally suited to the slow discovery of the nuances of this drink.

Can London hold on to its supremacy? "Well, New Yorkers would love it to be

otherwise," says Serena Sutcliffe MW, head of Sotheby's wine department, "but the fact is the whole world comes to London when it wants to buy wine. London draws on European cellars, and that gives everyone great confidence. London's status as a financial capital has a knock-on effect—many of the world's most wealthy buyers, for example, also have second houses here."

Stephen Browett of global wine broker Farr Vintners agrees. "If somebody in a third country wants to buy great wine, he or she will always come to London. Partly because we speak English; if you're Taiwanese, you don't want to buy your wine in German. Nobody likes buying wine which has spent time in America, because storage conditions are so hazardous there. The really peculiar thing is why Paris and the French aren't more important, but the fact is that there's nowhere in France where you can buy great Bordeaux, Burgundy, Rhine wines and Champagne all in the same place. We view wine objectively; the French are insular and partial. There are wine producers in Bordeaux who have never even tasted Burgundy."

Sutcliffe also points out that the British market is liked by producers for its professionalism and steadiness. "The Americans can blow incredibly hot and cold. They want everything for two years, when a wine is fashionable, then it slips out of fashion and they don't want it any more. The American wine trade doesn't have the solid knowledge and background of the British wine trade, either—they tend to regard selling wine as 'moving boxes'. The trade in Britain is head and shoulders above anywhere else."

The most striking phenomenon of the last decade is the way in which the wine trade has expanded, becoming more stratified as it has done so. Some seven out of ten bottles of wine drunk in Britain are now sold through supermarkets (significantly, the wine buyers of Sainsbury, Safeway and Marks & Spencer all work in London, with those of Tesco and Waitrose not far away in Harlow and Bracknell). This vast democratisation of wine has seen more people beginning to climb the



DAVID LEVENSON





Simon Berry of traditional wine merchants Berry Bros & Rudd, left, one of the first to trade on the Internet. Below, barrels of port for the highly discerning British wine market.

ladder of knowledge, which in turn has kept traditional merchants in business, since the kind of £5 to £15 bottles in which they specialise are often not available in large enough quantities for supermarkets.

Perhaps more significant for London, however, is what has been happening at the top of the market, in the fine-wine sphere. It might seem surprising that Pimlico-based brokers Farr Vintners received the Queen's Award for Export Achievement in 1995, as did City-based Corney & Barrow in 1998. After all, these companies produce nothing whatsoever; they merely buy and sell. What on earth have they been exporting?

The answer is that they have logged up such impressive international sales of fine wines, largely French, that they actually fall into export achievement parameters. Farr Vintners in particular has become the world's most important fine-wine broker, selling more wine than all the British auction houses combined. Much of this goes to the Far East, a market which went wine-crazy in the mid-90s.

The economic difficulties the region experienced in 1997 and 1998 has taken the wind

out of the boom, yet sales remain constant enough for even the most traditional of London merchants, Berry Bros & Rudd, to consider it worth opening a new Hong Kong operation in early 1999. "What we found with our shops in Terminals 3 and 4 at Heathrow," says Simon Berry of Berry Bros & Rudd, "was that many Asia-bound customers were missing what you could call the classic English wine-merchant act. They could buy famous wines from great vintages, but they were missing the full range. That's what we're going to provide. It's really no different from what we did 100 years ago when we opened an office in Inverness. In fact it's probably easier to get stock to Hong Kong now than it was to Scotland then."

Anyone visiting the bare-boarded, high-desked St James' Street premises of this 300-year-old company might be forgiven for considering it inextricably wedged in the past, yet in addition to its Heathrow outlets, its Basingstoke warehouse, and its new ventures in Hong Kong (and, before long, in Dublin), it was also one of the first British wine merchants to pitch its tent on the internet. "Once again," says Simon Berry, "we learned exactly the same lesson: you won't be successful with the technology unless you apply good, old-fashioned shop-keeping methods. The Internet, in the end, is no different from anywhere else: people want help, service, attention."

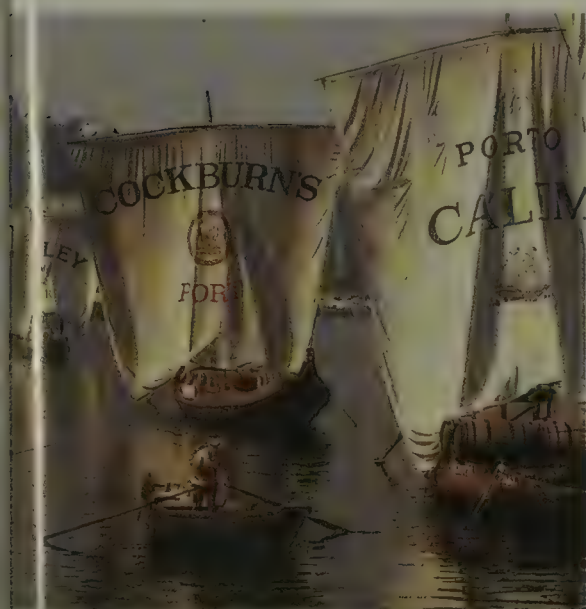
I wondered whether it would be St James' Street, the Hong Kong office or the website which would sell most wine for the company in 50 years. "I don't know, frankly," said Simon Berry. "What I do know is that the wine trade is going to be more important than ever it was. Markets are expanding; people are drinking more and more. What wine producers—even the Bordelais—are realising is that they need an intermediary which sees the bigger picture, which can sell to the world. London does that. Nowhere else."

□ Andrew Jefford is wine correspondent of London's *Evening Standard*.

For the very finest wines, you will need to buy either at auction or via specialised broking companies. London certainly has the best and most experienced wine auction houses in the world in **Christie's** (0171-839 9060) and **Sotheby's** (0171-493 8080). London also has the world's most efficient and competitive fine-wine broking company in **Farr Vintners** (0171-821 2000). Other London brokers include **Bordeaux Index** (0171-278 9495), **Cave Cru Classé** (0171-940 5100), **Fine & Rare** (0181-960 1995) and **Robert Rolls** (0171-248 8382), and merchants such as Justerini & Brooks, Berry Bros & Rudd, John Armit and Corney & Barrow have broking divisions, too.

Wine education is another area in which Londoners are offered astonishing choice. Both **Christie's** (63 Old Brompton Road SW7, 0171-581 3933) and **Sotheby's** (34-35 New Bond St, W1A, 0171-293 6423) run their own, well-attended wine schools taught by the wine trade's biggest names; **Leith's School of Food & Wine** (21 St Alban's Grove W8, 0171-229 0177) offers popular courses as does the official education arm of the wine trade, **The Wine & Spirit Education Trust** (Five Kings House, 1 Queen St Place EC4, 0171-236 3551). Among the specialist, private wine schools; my own choice would be Winewise, run by the scholarly and articulate **Michael Schuster** (107 Culford Road N1, 0171-254 9734).

**Vinopolis** opens at the beginning of July at Park Street, SE1. For details or to book contact the Ticketmaster Vinopolis Hotline on 0870 4444777 or visit <http://www.ticketmaster.co.uk>. Introductory entrance: £10. Opening times: 10am-5.30pm.





# Crime Zone

As British readers abandon cosy whodunnits for the gritty realism of American psycho-fiction, Marcel Berlins tracks down tomorrow's stars.

**W**ho, for most of the 1990s, has been easily the best-selling crime fiction writer in Britain?

The answer—Patricia Cornwell—says much about changing British tastes. It was another American, James Lee Burke, who won the Crime Writers' Association's Golden Dagger, the highest British award, for the crime book of 1998—*Sunset Limited*. Why, in a field in which the British have been pre-eminent for a whole century, are their favourite author and the best book, American? And what does it say about the state of crime fiction in Britain today?

Cornwell's trademark is her meticulous description of autopsies. For page after page her heroine, Dr Kay Scarpetta, chief medical officer of Richmond, Virginia, slices up mutilated and decomposing bodies. We are spared no repellent detail. Her books contain, too, frequent appearances by psychopaths determined to murder the dedicated doctor.

There is no current British equivalent to Cornwell. Serial killers and gory lessons in dismembering are a mainly American preserve. But in the last 20 years, British crime fiction (it used to be labelled English, but Scots writers are now among the best around) has moved out of its traditional ghetto of polite respectability and joined the real world of violence, sex and social decay.

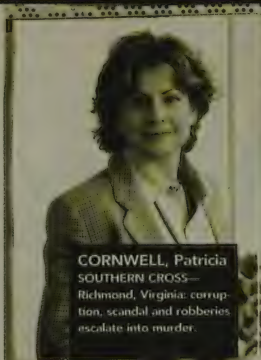
There's a word in the crime fiction business to describe, somewhat sneeringly, the kind of whodunnits written by Agatha Christie and her contemporaries: cosies. The archetypal cosy is set in a country house or pretty village, where a group of ill-assorted people have gathered; one of them

is foully murdered. Luckily, a tiresome private detective, or Scotland Yard policeman, happens to be on the scene and proceeds to solve the mystery, though not before at least one of the main suspects has also been despatched. The solution is revealed to the traditionally assembled bunch of survivors, one of whom is the guilty party. An undemanding, entertaining read; and, above all, an unrealistic story.

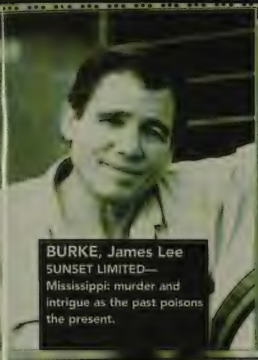
The traditional whodunnit was designed as escapism, getting away from the humdrum or unpleasantness of everyday existence and joining the fantasy world of unbelievable murder and detection. There are still many writers churning out the formula, some of them with great skill. P D James's last two books, *Original Sin* and *A Certain Justice*, set in the respective worlds of book publishing and the law, are fundamentally cosies, with a half-dozen or so possible suspects, complete with motives, vying for Chief Superintendent Adam Dalgliesh's attention. It should also not be

## Whodunnit?

Caught in the act—the writers responsible for some of this year's hottest crime fiction.



**CORNWELL, Patricia**  
**SOUTHERN CROSS**—  
Richmond, Virginia: corruption, scandal and robberies escalate into murder.



**BURKE, James Lee**  
**SUNSET LIMITED**—  
Mississippi: murder and intrigue as the past poisons the present.



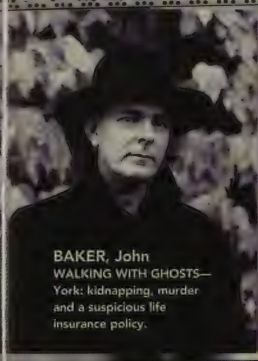
**MCDERMID, Val**  
**WIRE IN THE BLOOD**—  
Manchester: the search is on for a serial killer targeting women.



**WALTERS, Minette**  
**THE BREAKER**—Dorset: a woman's body is washed up on a beach—did her husband kill her?



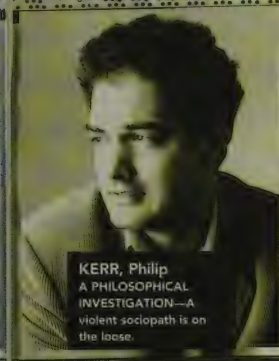
**HENDERSON, Lauren**  
**THE STRAWBERRY TATTOO**—New York: reluctant sleuth finds art is murder in the big apple.



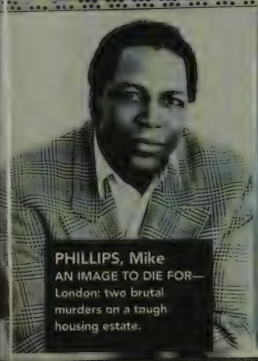
**BAKER, John**  
**WALKING WITH GHOSTS**—  
York: kidnapping, murder and a suspicious life insurance policy.



**BLINCOE, Nicholas**  
**MANCHESTER SLINGBACK**—Manchester: delves into the nasty side of the city's gay scene.



**KERR, Philip**  
**A PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATION**—A violent sociopath is on the loose.



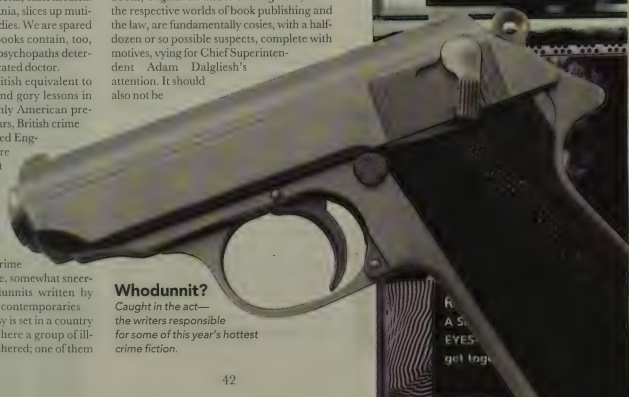
**PHILLIPS, Mike**  
**AN IMAGE TO DIE FOR**—  
London: two brutal murders on a tough housing estate.



**RANKIN, Ian**  
**DEAD SOULS**—Edinburgh: a paedophile and a convicted murderer lurk in the city.



**DUFFY, Stella**  
**BENEATH THE BLONDE**—  
London: tracking down an international stalker.





forgotten that Agatha Christie is still the best-selling detective-story writer in the world today. Cosies are far from dead. But the emphasis of crime fiction has changed dramatically. No longer is the majority of the crime-reading public satisfied with makeshift plots, one-dimensional characters, creaking dialogue and amateur detectives solving crimes that have baffled the constabulary. We've all seen and read too much about real-life crime and investigation to be taken in, even for the purposes of escapism.

The result of this higher public expectation has been a move towards realism. The characters have to have real emotions, the police's procedures have to be accurate, the settings believable, the plot more or less plausible, the issues raised genuine ones. This trend took several forms. The British detective story began to move out of London and the Home Counties and into the provinces, from bourgeois homes to shabby rooms, from the rural idyll of Miss Marple's St Mary Mead (the village with the highest per capita homicide rate in the world) to run-down inner-city council estates. Reginald Hill's Yorkshire, John Harvey's Nottingham, Val McDermid's Manchester and Ian Rankin's Edinburgh are a few of many examples of geographical spread. The subjects of the crime novel became bolder and more in tune with the preoccupations of the time: drugs, child abuse, children who kill, homelessness, rape, psychotic disorders.

A whole new generation of women writers emerged in the 1980s, with thoroughly modern women as their heroines. Liza Cody, starting with the spry, young private-eye Anna Lee, moved on courageously to write books featuring a deliberately unattractive, often repulsive heroine—the foul-mouthed, massively fat female wrestler Eva Wylie, the London Lassassin. Sarah Dunant's Hannah Wolfe and Joan Smith's Oxford academic Loretta Lawson pursued deliberately feminist agendas. Mike Phillips introduced Sam Dean, a black journalist-sleuth.

Perhaps the most wide-ranging movement was the shift away from the whodunnit to the whydunnit, and the flowering of the psychological crime story. The clues to the solution were no longer lipsticked cigarette ends and railway timetables, but what went on in people's minds. Sometimes there was no solution in the traditional sense, but a build-up of suspense as, for instance, a warped killer closed in on his prey; or a growing obsession exploded into violence. Ruth Rendell continues to lead the field in the sheer scariness of her psychological portraits. We follow the inexorable descent of ordinary people into madness and murder. The veteran Margaret Yorke, once a definite cosy, has become a brilliant exponent of the turmoil and horror that lies behind respectable façades in boring suburbia. A generation younger, Frances Fyfield explores the limits of Freudian dysfunctionality.

Minette Walters has become the most successful bridge between the cosy and the psycho. At one level, as in *The Ice House* and *The Scold's Bridle*, there is the traditional small

group of people in an enclosed community, one (or more) a victim, another the killer. Within that formula, though, the answers are founded on the psychological. She pares the usual whodunnit formula to its minimum. In *The Breaker*, the choice of murderer is between only two people. *The Sculptress* asks just one question: is the convicted patricide of the title in fact guilty? The ending is ambiguous and Walters herself refuses to say whether she believes her to be her father's murderer.

This marriage between contemporary realism and old-fashioned hunting-the-criminal is most evident in the policeman-as-hero (though much-flawed hero) books of Ian Rankin, John Harvey and the underrated Bill James. British television's most watched detective, Colin Dexter's Inspector Morse, is a softer figure, and the dreamy Oxford setting gives Dexter's books an almost "cosy" feel. Rankin's

## British crime fiction has joined the real world of violence, sex and social decay.

Inspector John Rebus is a tough Edinburgh copper: overweight, a drinker, insubordinate to his superiors, with his personal life in turmoil and bearing constant feelings of guilt. He is a brilliant cop, occasionally prone to cutting corners, but with an inner sense of justice and fairness that's stronger than his surface world-weary cynicism.

John Harvey's cop, the sandwich-and-jazz loving Charlie Resnick of the Nottingham force, is in a similar mould. He was chosen by the *Sherlock Holmes* magazine as the "Best Detective" of 1998; but Harvey has announced that the tenth Resnick book, *Last Rites*, will be the last. What Rankin, Harvey and Bill James (with his cop duo Harpur and Iles) share is the ability to tell an exciting story which is at the same time procedurally accurate in its forensic details and convincing in its presentation of police culture and atmosphere.

At the cutting-edge generation of young writers, Nicholas Blincoe, in his early 30s, holds court, leading the "neo-noir" movement, about as far as you can get from the traditional whodunnit. In *Acid Casuals* and *Manchester Slingback*, the setting is Manchester's club, gay and drugs scene. His characters are at the extreme end of the social and sexual scene; descriptions of various forms of exotic behaviour can be shocking, but his works have a power, truth and courage that demand admiration. Colin Bateman (books set in

Belfast), John Baker (York) and Paul Charles (north London) are among the new wave of tough (but often mordantly funny) writers presenting an unsparing, disconcerting view of modern society at its lowest.

Stella Duffy, in her mid-30s, has created a splendid lesbian detective in Saz Martin, though her sexuality is not the dominant aspect of her lively, witty, up-to-the-minute crime tales; and Duffy does not share Blincoe's penchant for sometimes excessive ultra-realism. An even younger talented writer, Lauren Henderson, places her heterosexual, sculptress heroine in the art world, and proves that it is possible to be contemporary and realistic without providing the reader with unpleasant detail. Denise Danks has quickly become the Crime Queen of New Technology. Hers is the world of the computer, the microchip, the Internet, even, spectacularly in *Phreak*, the mobile phone. Crimes and their solutions are planned and delivered by those means; yet she manages to provide gripping criminal plots without drowning her readers with intimidating jargon or the need to understand every technological twist.

There's no question that today's crime fiction authors are far better writers than their counterparts of half a century ago. But there's a problem. P D James is nearly 80, Margaret Yorke 75, Ruth Rendell nearly 70. Many other prolific crime writers of excellence are in their 60s. But where is the new generation? Even Minette Walters, the new joint Queen of Crime (James and Rendell haven't quite abdicated their thrones yet) is around 50. Where are the 30-year-olds to carry on the tradition? They do exist, as we've seen; but the bad news is that there are not enough of them, and many are turning from crime to other literary activities.

The threat to their future is financial. The fact is that in Britain—as distinct from America, with its far larger market—it is very difficult to make a living from writing crime. Only by selling well in the States, or by landing a television series based on the books, can a British writer earn enough to be able to stay in the trade. Philip Kerr is just one example of a brilliant young crime writer—*A Philosophical Investigation* is a superbly original work—leaving the genre to seek greater fortunes in the mainstream. Stella Duffy works as an actress and has to write non-crime books as well. Publishers' advances to crime writers—apart from the relatively few best-selling ones and those with television tie-ins—are smaller than they were a decade ago. There is a real danger that the pool of talented crime writers that has served Britain so well for a century will be greatly depleted.

So where does the crime novel go from here? We seem to have had every possible kind of detective, of every sexual persuasion. Geographically, there can be few places that remain to be featured in a novel. The subject areas covered have penetrated every social, personal and criminal deviation possible. Explicitness of language and description can go no further. No taboos remain to be broken. What is left? The answer is that the reading





public shows no indication of waning interest. American writers will make even more of an inroad into British tastes. It has been said before—many times—that the crime novel is on its last legs, and each time it has managed to reinvent itself. It will do so again.

□ Marcel Berlins is a crime fiction reviewer for *The Times* and a legal columnist for *The Guardian*.

## Fiction's Most Wanted

**Manchester Slingback**, by Nicholas Blincoe.

Manchester gay lowlifer turned London casino owner returns to his old patch to help seek the still unfound killer of his best friend; his memories and regrets mix uneasily with today's vibrant anything-goes scene.



**Blind Date**, by Frances Fyfield. Obsessed by the brutal killing of her sister, ex-policewoman Elisabeth, herself disfigured by an acid attack, seeks refuge in a disused bell-tower; but the past returns to haunt. Gripingly claustrophobic atmosphere.



**Dead Souls**, by Ian Rankin. Multiple murderer, released from prison, returns to Edinburgh to settle an old score. Moody Inspector John Rebus has to stop him, while also hunting a paedophile and seeking the reason for a colleague's suicide.



**On Beulah Height**, by Reginald Hill. Yorkshire dale village flooded 15 years ago to make a new reservoir re-emerges in a drought; so do the bodies of three young girls. Cop duo Dalziel and Pascoe re-open old mysteries and discover savage secrets.



**Phreak**, by Denise Danks. Hacking into other people's mobile phones proves dangerous and even deadly as technology journalist Georgina Powers stumbles on a violent criminal network. The mobile assumes an evil menace of its own.



**A Sight for Sore Eyes**, by Ruth Rendell. When a child, Francine saw her mother being murdered; the crime remained unsolved. As an emotionally damaged adult, she meets artistic psychotic killer Teddy; childhood memories start to resurface.



**Beneath the Blonde**, by Stella Duffy.

The raunchy lead singer of a pop group is anonymously sent flowers wherever she travels and receives sinister phonecalls. Lesbian private eye Saz Martin investigates.



**The Breaker**, by Minette Walters.

A pregnant woman's body is washed up on the Dorset coast. Was she killed by the handsome lone walker on the cliffs above or her doormat husband with an alibi?



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Jewellery history has come out of the closet; a new crowd of gemmed-up, genned-up wearer-buyers, drawn by the charm and individuality of period jewellery, now revel in

history, names, signatures and marks. They've had a crush on Cartier, fallen for the Fifties, and now the trend is towards earlier, lesser known, more specialised individual makers. The jewellery world is digging deeper. And London, the home of antique jewellery and the world centre of expertise in jewellery history is where most of this digging is done.

So, perfectly pitched and perfectly timed, this June, in the midst of the capital's antiques season, a London jewellery exhibition lifts the lid on one of the great unsung French jewellery dynasties, the Maison Falize. Wartski, of Grafton Street, Fabergé specialists, and

a contemporary art journal of Lucien Falize's burial place, in a cemetery in a tiny village near Fontainebleau, led her to write to the mayor to find out if anyone was maintaining the gravestone. She was put in touch with M. Robert Falize, then aged 83, the son of Jean Falize, of the last working generation of the family. Amazed that anyone should be interested in this esoteric work of his ancestors, M. Falize welcomed Katherine into his family, and enthusiastically shared with her all his precious memories, his 500 watercolour designs, the first album of drawings from 1838-46, his original photographs of craftsmen at work and the interior of the Falize shop, and the memoirs of Alexis Falize, the founder of the company. Katherine's book is dedicated to M. Falize, who at 94, sadly seems unlikely to visit the London exhibition. "Finding the family was the key to my research," explained Katherine. "I couldn't have contemplated writing a book with-

# FABULOUS FALIZE

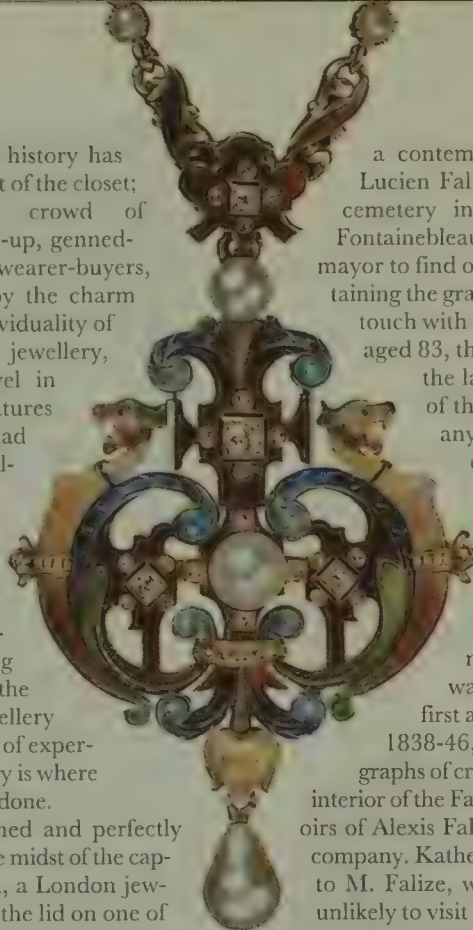
Lesser-known jewellers are fast becoming à la mode, says Vivienne Becker, as a spectacular exhibition this summer demonstrates.

known for their influential exhibitions, has put together a rich panoply of jewels and objects made by three Falize generations. This exhibition celebrates the publication of the first book on the Falize family, written by Wartski director Katherine Purcell. Together, the book, 10 years in the making, and the exhibition, make a rare and valuable contribution to decorative arts history, bringing to light fresh archival material, original photographs, documents and working drawings. Katherine has made the subject of Falize very much her own. "My interest was first aroused by research I was undertaking on French enamelwork," she explains. "I was intrigued by tidbits of conflicting information about the family, and decided to track down any descendants." In so doing she was to stumble on one of the most remarkable and insightful caches of information in recent years.

Katherine turned detective; a mention in

out that contact, and the archival material. I was able to examine all the different styles interpreted by Falize and delve into their influences and inspiration." Since Katherine has used her determination to cajole lenders, both private and museums, into lending a stunning selection of jewels and objects for the show, the whole gamut of Falize styles will be represented in the exhibition: Romantic, Renaissance, Japanese, Egyptian, Moorish, Indian and more. The Falize family took their inspirations seriously and studiously, especially the medieval and Renaissance prototypes. However, explains Katherine, they were not only historians, but also precursors of Art Nouveau, with their intense interest in plant forms and Japanese art.

The story of the Maison Falize centres around Lucien Falize, celebrated for his vibrantly coloured, and technically superb Japanese-style cloisonné enamels. But with his own considerable achieve-







Above, *La Fortune* depicts "Fortuna" after an engraving by Virgil Solis, standing on a pearl against a shell of tourmaline with a blue-enamelled sail. Left, two gold and enamelled gem-set pendants in the Renaissance style by Lucien Falize.

ments. Lucien's father, Alexis Falize (1811-98), who started the family business, had set the scene for his son's success, pointing him in the direction of the many varied styles that were to shape the Falize reputation.

Alexis had begun working as a jewellery designer in 1833 for the Paris firm Mellerio, and by 1838 his elaborate Second Empire designs had attracted the attention of many other Paris jewellers, notably Janisset for whom he worked exclusively. In 1841, Falize registered his own mark and set up his own business, supplying leading retailers, so that very few of the early Falize jewels are signed—although Katherine Purcell's work has helped enormously with new attributions.

Alexis Falize was more interested in the artistic content of a jewel than its intrinsic value, and his greatest contribution, widely acknowledged among his contemporaries, was the introduction of enamels into fine jewellery, mainly at first in the painted Limoges style.

By the 1860s, Alexis, like so many artists and designers of the day, was captivated by the startling power of Japanese art that had flooded into Paris as trade routes reopened. He shared this passion with his son Lucien, who had joined the firm in 1856, and who was deeply moved by the wealth of Japanese arts and crafts exhibited in Paris in 1867.

It is still not certain whether Alexis or Lucien instigated the distinctive Falize style of Japanese-inspired cloisonné enamels, but whoever was responsible, the new, brilliant jewels drew ecstatic acclaim: made with breathtaking craftsmanship, with the finest of gold cloisons or "cells", enclosing crisp and vibrantly coloured translucent enamels, their vivid brilliance and sheen was clearly in tune with the fashions of the day. The most distinctive are slender, round gold plaques, enamelled with Japanese-style scenes from nature: birds, flowers, insects, water, sky. Always immaculately finished and counter-enamelled, the jewels were often reversible. There were necklaces, pendants, lockets, studs, cufflinks, and small decorative objects, while the strikingly simple Japanese themes were joined by more extravagantly ornamented articulated bracelets made of elaborate floral plaques, by bangles and brooches (showing Alexis' hand) inspired by medieval manuscripts, with messages in Gothic script, writhing dragons, and exotic birds. Falize worked closely with the finest craftsmen in Paris, notably with the virtuoso enamellist Antoine Tard, who was able to turn Falize's ideas into reality.

Lucien longed to travel to Japan, but his parents were violently opposed to such a long and dangerous journey, and instead he immersed himself in albums of Hokusai prints and in the study of ceramics, lacquers and bronzes that were circulating in Paris at the time. He saw Japanese art and imagery, its affinity with nature, its economy of line and expression, not as a model to be copied slavishly, but as a starting point for an entirely new approach to the decorative arts.

When Lucien Falize exhibited in Paris in 1878 for the first time under his own name, his display was praised for its vast range of inspirations and styles, for its Renaissance extravaganzas, a Chinese hair ornament, and



an Indian-style necklace. One of the prize pieces in the Wartski exhibition shows Lucien's intellectual preoccupation with historical sources: La Fortune is an exquisitely modelled and coloured pendant depicting "Fortuna", after an engraving by Virgil Solis, standing on a pearl flanked by gold cornucopia, above an enamelled satyr's head, against a shell of carved tourmaline with a blue-enamelled sail. A version of a similar pendant was exhibited in 1880 and purchased by a Portuguese nobleman, whose daughter was lady-in-waiting to Queen Amelia of Portugal.

When, in 1880, Lucien joined forces with Germain Bapst, descendant of the illustrious French Crown jewellers, the new firm of Bapst et Falize was able to refine and perfect Falize specialities including the successful enamelwork. Adding yet another technique to an impressive repertoire, they revived the medieval process of Basse Taille enamelling, which relies on the quality of engraving beneath translucent enamels. Falize worked closely with M. Pye, his favourite engraver.

Lucien Falize was now also able to indulge his intellectual pursuits, researching, writing and lecturing extensively on his subject, on jewellery history and Japanese art, campaigning for the jewellery industry, and becoming an active and valued member of the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs.

Lucien died unexpectedly early in 1897, a year before his father Alexis died, and the firm was taken over by Lucien's sons, André, Pierre, and Jean, the father of M. Robert Falize. They called themselves Falize Frères, and embarked on a new era, embracing the Art Nouveau style, to which their father had made such a contribution and which they interpreted in their own distinctive manner, as they demonstrated at the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris.

Despite some impressive commissions in the early years of the century, including the Crown Jewels and regalia for the coronation of King Peter I of Serbia in 1904, it became clear that the most artistically fertile period was over for the Maison Falize. Yet, their reputation was such that a magnificent commission came their way in 1921: Falize was asked to make the crown worn by Queen Marie of Rumania for her coronation in 1922. Queen Marie, the grand-daughter of Queen Victoria, was a noted beauty, a socialite and woman of great taste and fashion. For this crown, which was

to be made of Transylvanian gold, Queen Marie had a dramatic, medieval vision, and perhaps it was the famous Falize affinity with medieval styles that led the Queen to their door. Based on Byzantine models, inspired by the mosaics of Ravenna depicting the bejewelled Empress Theodora,

the deep crown was hung with shoulder length pendulums over the ears, ornamented with medallions bearing the arms of the King and Queen, strands of ears of wheat, signifying fertility, and a series of crosses.

The crown was set idiosyncratically with semi-precious stones, moonstones, chrysoprases, a turquoise matrix, amethysts and garnets.

So impressed was Queen Marie with the crown, that in the following year she decided to commission a replica, in silver-gilt, but set with precious gems, as a gift to her friend Alma de Bretteville Spreckels, wife of a Californian sugar baron, for generous financial aid to Rumania during and after World War I.

Her husband, King Ferdinand also commissioned from Falize a marshal's baton, finely chased with the Rumanian crest and motto at one end, and the blue-enamelled Rumanian cross with his monogram at the other, the length covered in crimson, gold-embroidered velvet. Later, in 1938, his son, King Carol II, appeared on the front cover of the December 3rd issue of *The Illustrated London News*, in full regalia and holding a baton, identical to that of his father, but clearly his own since it carried his initials, the crossed C's.

Both Jean and Pierre Falize had left the family business to pursue their own careers, and André was left to struggle with an ailing enterprise until his death in 1936. At the end, there was little stock left; the memories of glory long past were the most precious possession of the Maison Falize.

Now this superb exhibition revives that glory and throws a new light on the noble art of the goldsmith. Katherine Purcell is hopeful that the exquisite watercolour designs in both the exhibition and in her book will root out Falize treasures in French families



Above, King Carol II of Rumania on the cover of "The Illustrated London News", holding the baton he commissioned from Falize, left. Far left, a brooch with a Buddhist monk seated on a silver cloud in the folds of a dragon, by Lucien Falize. Below left, design for a hair-ornament by Alexis Falize. Below right, a Bapst et Falize gold and enamelled bangle decorated with medieval script.

or European collections. "So little Falize work was signed," she explains, "that owners may have no idea of the origins of their possessions, their maker, or the rich stories behind them." The exhibition, its importance honoured with significant loans from major museums around the world, including The Victoria and Albert Museum, The British Museum and The Metropolitan Museum, New York, will do much to feed the fast-growing appetite for serious jewellery history, as it pays homage to the rich heritage of a fascinating family of dedicated jewellers.

□ Vivienne Becker is a jewellery historian, broadcaster and author of several books on jewellery design.

□ The Falize Exhibition runs from 10-19 June. For details contact Wartski on 0171 493 1141. Thames and Hudson is publishing *Falize, A Dynasty of Jewellers* by Katherine Purcell, price £55.







**BURBERRY**

DAY MARKET REGENT STREET LONDON W1T 7HS BRIDGE



# Urban safari

It's a jungle out there and it's getting wilder. Ralph Gaines opens our eyes to London's hidden inhabitants.



Water voles  
**W6**



Kingfishers  
**N1**



Snipes  
**SW6**

Tawny owls  
**N6**



Weasels  
**W8**

**W**alking home from Highgate Tube after a hard day at the office, the last thing anyone might expect is to be pounced upon by a tawny owl. But, as I walked briskly down Shepherd's Hill, that is exactly what happened to me.

I was not the object of our feathered friend's desire—a female owl sitting coyly in a nearby tree was the target. I had unwittingly interrupted a courtship ritual. A rare occurrence? Increasingly not, for London is not just a metropolis

*Above, tawny owls are breeding in Highgate; while weasels, left, have snapped up prestigious addresses in Kensington.*

*Opposite: top, water voles head for west London; centre, kingfishers like King's Cross; bottom, shy snipes are braving trendy Fulham.*

teeming with people, it is a haven for myriad wildlife as well.

Ask many people about city wildlife and the best that they can come up with is foxes, pigeons and sparrows. Too often it is assumed that wildlife does not live in the city. For those in the know, the real picture is very different—London is, in fact, home to an astonishing variety of wildlife. Sparrowhawks breeding in Regent's Park, kingfishers at King's Cross and water voles in west London, look closely and there are some real surprises.

So why do we share what is one of the largest cities in the world with such a variety of wildlife? Perhaps because London is such a green city—over 50 per cent of it is open space. Unlike many continental and American cities which were planned and are, therefore, more densely packed, London evolved haphazardly around village greens

and commons. Its rows of houses with gardens provide further opportunity for animals compared with, say, Milanese mansion blocks.

Towards outer London, large fragments of traditional countryside, such as Totteridge Fields, have escaped development, some excellent ancient woodlands such as Highgate Wood and Queen's Wood have stood for hundreds of years and the North Downs, rich in orchids and butterflies, extend into south London. Add to this the royal parks, Wimbledon Common and Hampstead Heath and a picture emerges of a diverse landscape that gives each "village" in London its own special character.

But what about central London? Here too the situation is looking good for wild animals. The site of the Millennium Dome was once home to breeding skylarks, and Crystal Palace Park is now to get a multiplex entertainment centre where nature once thrived. Other so-called wasteland sites rich in slow-worms and lizards, goldfinches and linnets, and often

Park regulars, and kestrels nesting on tower-block balconies, central London boasts a wide range of wildlife. Weasels have recently been spotted in Kensington, a colony of wild orchids has stopped Ken Bates's expansion plans for Chelsea football ground, while snipes—normally shy water-meadow birds—have been spotted by vigilant riverside-dwellers in Fulham.

Of course, it needs no expert to tell us that London, with its concrete and air pollution, would not be most wild animals' first choice of habitat. And, as building continues, sadly, some excellent sites continue to be lost. The site of the Millennium Dome was once home to breeding skylarks, and Crystal Palace Park is now to get a multiplex entertainment centre where nature once thrived. Other so-called wasteland sites rich in slow-worms and lizards, goldfinches and linnets, and often

the unofficial playgrounds of local kids, are now being targeted for development as part of London's urban renaissance. On the outer fringes of the city, traditional farmland is coming under increased pressure. It is here that small-scale farming is losing out to new golf courses, riding stables and cemeteries. Out so the hedgerows, wildflower-rich meadows and small ponds to be replaced with sterile landscapes that have little or no wildlife value. Far from becoming despondent, however, we should derive encouragement from the many successes in maintaining and attracting wildlife back to the city.

The increase in wildlife in London is probably due to changing attitudes—there has been a growing interest in nature conservation since the 1980s. Margaret Thatcher's squeeze on public spending also helped: local councils cut back

on spending and one of the first areas to be affected was maintenance of parks. With this came the recognition that we can live with a style of open space different from the manicured Victorian-inspired formal gardens. These have their place, but are expensive, labour-intensive landscapes and councils are limiting them to where they are most appropriate. Hyde Park has adopted a more natural-style grassland in places and mini nature-parks have sprung up in Islington, Camden and the East End. Some park managers have gone a step further and Holland Park, Wandsworth Common, and Hampstead Heath now have ecology centres where local children can discover the watery world of tadpoles and dragonflies, spend evenings out with a bat-detector and learn about the lifestyles of butterflies and bugs. This is encouraging stuff. Battersea





Stag beetles



Top, Buckingham Palace garden is a prime wildlife site; stag beetles, and sparrowhawks favour suburban billets.

Sparrowhawks  
W4

Park perhaps is one of the best examples of "integrated" management. The Park plays host to beer festivals and sports events, but also provides superb nature areas, managed by London Wildlife Trust.

Also helping London's wildlife is the increasing number of dedicated nature reserves. London Wildlife Trust, founded in 1981, has now set up nearly 60 nature reserves across the capital. Some are former gravel workings, such as The Chase in Dagenham; some are orchid-rich downland sites; others have been created from scratch, such as Camley Street Natural Park in King's Cross (as featured in *This Year's Love*, Kathy Burke's recent Camden-based film). Many, such as Sydenham Hill Wood in Dulwich and Gunnersbury Triangle in Chiswick, were saved from development after lengthy campaigns. Now home to woodpeckers, sparrowhawks and rare hoverflies, they also feature footpaths, pond-dipping platforms and benches to encourage people to enjoy these wild places.

There are some areas of London that shine brightly on the national stage. Richmond Park has recently

been designated as a site of special scientific interest in recognition of its important status as one of Britain's most valuable old parks. This followed detailed surveys of its wildlife—particularly the insects that inhabit the ancient oaks. There are now some 35 areas in London with this designation and they join over 600 other designated wildlife sites in Greater London. These are just as important as our architectural heritage, and irreplaceable—it is vital that we protect them.

The seasons bring new arrivals to our shores and London (particularly the Thames) is a convenient stopover for many birds that spend their summers or winters here. The Thames' pollution levels have decreased, thanks to a clean-up programme, and over 100 species of fish can now be found beneath the murky surface. Indeed, the tidal Thames is the largest continuous habitat in Greater London and can claim to support one of the widest diversity of animals of any estuary in Europe. But it has other secrets too. The river is a convenient flight path for a variety of birds. Teal, shoveler and gadwall are just some

of the ducks that have no objection to urban living, while waders such as redshanks, ringed plovers and green sandpipers can be heard on quieter evenings on mudflats up and down the Thames. Many of these are moving between well-established feeding and roosting areas exposed with the tides—particularly in some of the quieter, East London reaches of the Thames.

London's birdlife will receive a boost when the magnificent Wetlands Centre at Barn Elms nature reserve is finally completed in April 2000. Some £15m has been spent on this vast collection of pools, reed beds, grazing marshes and a nature trail introducing visitors to resident ducks and geese. Other good Thames-side sites include the banks alongside Kew Gardens and Syon Park, and the islands at Isleworth and Richmond. Closer to central London, the Hurlingham Club boasts a rare feature—a natural foreshore. Too often new development encroaches on this vital habitat. Indeed, so well blessed with wildlife is this exclusive establishment that it has recently started a wildlife watch club for its more junior members. Out to the east are slightly less salubrious, but equally important, sites such as Barking Reach and Rainham Marshes, where, amid the derelict industrial areas, some excellent bird sites are to be had. Rainham Marshes have now become a battleground—Havering Council has plans for warehouses, and wildlife organisations see the area as a potential world-class nature reserve.

Other unusual discoveries in the capital have been made. A recent survey has shown that south-east London is a national hot-spot for the stag beetle. These ferocious-looking beetles fly clumsily through the summer air looking for a mate,

having spent up to seven years as a large grub munching through dead wood. Quite why south-east London is such a popular spot for these endangered creatures is unclear (the survey received over 2,500 sightings from an enthusiastic public), but it may demonstrate the importance of large, mature suburban gardens.

It is in our gardens that we can take most action to help our wild neighbours. Here the Royal Family is helping to lead the way because Buckingham Palace is thought to be the best garden for wildlife in the capital. Its large size helps, but it is also the result of careful management to provide features to attract wildlife, including stretches of water and mature shrubberies where nesting birds can live undisturbed. We can all follow in the Queen's footsteps. In Greater London, gardens amount to an area the size of the Isle of Wight. With sympathetic gardening we can help natural pest controllers, such as frogs and hedgehogs, and encourage woodpeckers on to our bird tables. Even loft-dwellers can add greenery to their balconies and put up bird boxes. With small effort we can breathe new (wild)life into London.

A look round our capital shows just how resilient nature can be as long as some care is taken to look after it. Along with the world-class museums, restaurants, theatres and shops, London's wild spaces are another bonus of city life and we should learn to cherish them. Just be careful during the tawny owl mating season.

□ The London Wildlife Trust provides information on how one can help attract more animals to the city. London Wildlife Trust, Harling House, 47-51 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0BS. Tel: 0171-261 0447.

The £15m Barn Elms Wetlands Centre, due to open in April 2000, will provide pools, reed beds and marshes for a rich variety of birdlife.



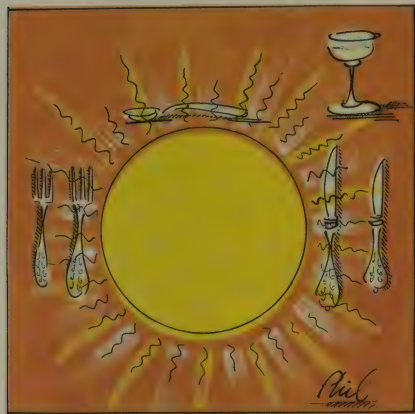


For those who know.

Veuve Clicquot  
LA GRANDE DAME  
*Champagne*





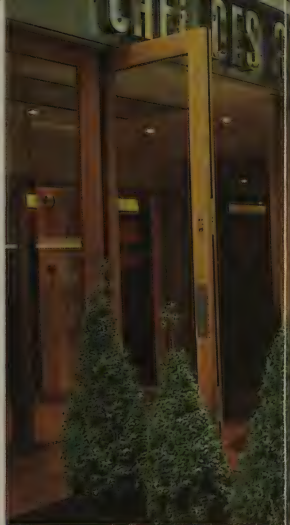


# A Taste of Summer

Charles Campion introduces a selection of London restaurants where you can enjoy flavours from warmer climes in sunny surroundings.

It was Horace Walpole who observed in a letter to a friend that, "the way to ensure summer in England is to have it glazed and framed in a comfortable room", and for all the hysteria about global warming one has to admit that he had a point. There are very few occasions when the weather is so marvellous that it is not improved by being viewed through the window of a congenial restaurant, and nowadays restaurant designers go out of their way to create dining rooms that look bright and airy, even when cricketers are wringing out sodden flannels and the rain is beating down. Chefs are playing their part as well: it is hard to glance through a menu that is awash with virgin olive oil and dotted with preserved lemons, without thinking of the Mediterranean and North Africa. Our mood is so often influenced by what we eat, and savouring sunny food is one step nearer to a sunny disposition, whatever the weather is like outside.

Doctors tell us that sunlight plays a key role in our wellbeing and back up their hypothesis with statistics which seem to show that the Northern races are all busily committing suicide while the jolly Southerners are sleeping in the sun without a care in the world. On the face of it there is no contest—we all prefer long, lazy summer days, and perhaps that is why there are so few Scandinavian restaurants in London and so many Mediterranean ones.



## IN WITH THE NEW

The Café des Amis du Via as it used to be known, was one of the 1980s' most resolutely French restaurants—people were drawn by the epic chessboard, and by the simple bourgeois French food. In 1998 it emerged from a major refurbishment with its name curtailed to **Café des Amis** and the old decor replaced with something altogether newer and brighter. The menu has been updated and Thai fishcakes with pak choi are likely to be found alongside the Salade Niçoise and fish soup. This style is a modern and lively version of the kind of food you might expect in an eating house in the South of France. If the weather is such that you find yourself unable even to imagine summer, take refuge in the wine bar in the cellar—it



is very dark and womblike, with no windows.

## ROOM WITH A VIEW

**Morton's**—the private members' club occupies a commanding position on Berkeley Square overlooking the gardens which are now sadly bereft of nightingales. Morton's the Restaurant on the first floor is now open to the public, and the long French doors give the proud possessor of a window table an excellent vantage point to observe all the comings and goings of Mayfair. The food is by Gary Holliday who has previously been awarded Michelin stars. His style is bold, decorative and makes good use of fresh ingredients. Look for well-judged fish cookery and accomplished sauces. Dishes like Medallions of Lobster and Scallops with a Spring Onion Risotto and Millefeuille of Red Mullet, Plum Tomato and Potato Confit are particularly impressive. There is also a good value set lunch.

## A LITTLE BIT OF ITALY

**Zafferano** may be in Lowndes Street, and the windows may look out on to the sleekness of Belgravia, but inside you will find a little piece of Italy. The decor is not Italian per se, but the emphasis on style most certainly is: plain colours and huge bunches of flowers. Giorgio Locatelli's food is Italian to the core—expect serious pasta, and superb risotti (each grain of rice perfectly cooked, the ideal backdrop for saffron, asparagus or rich cheeses) then there are fish dishes, and murderously self-indulgent puddings. All the trappings are authentic too: splendid bread and a saucer of oil to dip it into; a fine wine list; and suave service. If you have fond

memories of summer holidays in Italy this is one place where you can relive them without disappointment.

## CUNNY SUE UP

**Teca** is something of a hidden restaurant. It lies at the heart of Mayfair—in the mews where all the limousine drivers hang out while waiting for their employers who are kicking up their heels at Claridge's. When the weather is fine the tables and chairs spill out on to the street, and when it is not, large windows bring summer inside where it will be quite at home with the sophisticated Italian food. The chefs here did their training with the great Marchesi in Italy, and you can expect simple, but glorious Italian food—Ravioli di Melanzane e Taleggio, the richness of aubergines with melting cheese; or Medaglioni di Giallo di Rossa alla Griglia con Carciofi e Patata—grilled monkfish with artichokes and new potatoes, the very taste of summer itself.

## SIMPLE LIFE

Whatever can the residents of the part of Chiswick that runs down to the Thames have done to deserve a restaurant like **Grano** on their doorstep? It looks like a clear case of a pact with the devil. Grano is a small, airy, and informal Italian restaurant a short staggering distance from the riverside pubs. It has struck a chord with the locals and is usually full to bursting—the key to this success is the simple, and very good, Italian food. The menu lists a range of ingredient-led, carefully prepared and well-judged dishes all at their very best—homely pasta, creamy risotti, and simple main courses.



Above, Giorgio Locatelli brings Italy to Belgravia. Left, the decor and the menu have been updated at Café des Amis. Below left, visit Morton's for a taste of the Mediterranean.

Everything is well seasoned and with a telling balance of textures and flavours. In the summer the tall windows at the front bring the good weather indoors, where it can meet the genuine tastes of the Mediterranean.

## TACAHU INDOOR

**Riccardo's** is a restaurant which treats its corner of the Fulham Road with exactly the same disrespect as it would in Italy—by spilling out on to the pavement and then hosing in the tables with canvas and polythene. With London summers being the way they are, this means that a little central heating can be brought to bear on allresco dining whenever it becomes necessary. The restaurant works to a "Spuntino" menu, 50 or more dishes are listed, but they all come in small portions and the diner is encouraged to have half a dozen. This makes for relaxed and informal dining; try some antipasti, plus some pasta; some grilled vegetables; some fresh fish; good olives; tasty bread; and sausages with lentils—it is easy to over-indulge here, almost as easy as it is in Italy!

## CURRY HOUSE

There are two branches of **Café Spice Namaste**, one in the City and the other (which is only open for dinner) on Lavender Hill. Here, in south London, the dining room echoes the ultra-bright colours of an exotic bazaar. Anyone who has never sampled authentic Indian food will be mesmerised by the vibrant flavours and the delicacy of the spicing; this is a restaurant to cheer the spirits. Try some of the Goan dishes, and imagine as a backdrop palm-fringed, white sandy beaches...





Left, sample authentic Indian food in the exotic setting of Café Spice Namaste. Above, Baradero is a genuine tapas bar which offers a real taste of Spain. Below, Lemonia, a bustling Greek restaurant, is a popular place for a party.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

**Gaudi** is one of the restaurants that has played a key part in the Clerkenwell phenomenon. The decor reflects the style that we associate with the architect and designer after which it has been named. The food is pure Spanish. Chef Nacho Martinez offers his own interpretation of classic dishes—so while there are empanadas (pastries like little pasties) they may well contain scallops. There are also pork dishes, elaborate sweets and an extensive Spanish wine list. The service is suitably laid back, perfectly in character.

## WORTH A WHISKY

**The Museum Street Café** is where you would expect, on Museum Street, just by the British Museum. The dining area faces the bar and the food is vegetarian and accomplished. The room is bright and informal and the menu ranges from coffee and cake to more elaborate lunch dishes. What could be more summery than a warm goat's cheese salad with roasted sweet potatoes and grilled aubergine with chipotle vinaigrette? Or perhaps the penne with tomato, cauliflower, basil and Parmesan? Then a simple dessert like banana with Greek-style yoghurt, honey and almonds. This kind of vegetarian food is a breath of fresh air.

## A TWIST OF LEMON

It is very cheery at **Lemonia**, a bustling Greek restaurant in Primrose Hill. The upstairs dining area gives way to a pretty conservatory, and everywhere there are the eponymous lemons. Lemons grow outside, feature on the tiles, decorate paintings and even crop up on the plate. The meze is a

good choice, bringing a tidal-wave of food, including all the old favourites. The cuisine is actually Greek-Cypriot, so look out for a good Greek salad and the fish shashlik. This is a popular place for groups, which means you should be prepared to flaunt your party spirit, or at the very least not be offended when others do so.

## IMPURE LEADINGS

**Baradero** is another restaurant where you need to pinch yourself to be quite sure of where you are. Outside is the London Arena, but inside you are in Spain. This is a genuine tapas bar, with a restaurant grafted on to it. The tapas are simple and good—grand Serrano ham; a dish of octopus in the Galician style; and Fabada Asturiana (a bean stew). If you prefer dining formally to the ceaseless stream of saucer dishes, the restaurant allows you to have a few tapas as a starter, so you can then go on to more serious dishes for main course—like a Paella Valenciana rich with chicken and shellfish. As the sun streams in through the windows, order a glass of Manzanilla and thank goodness for summer.

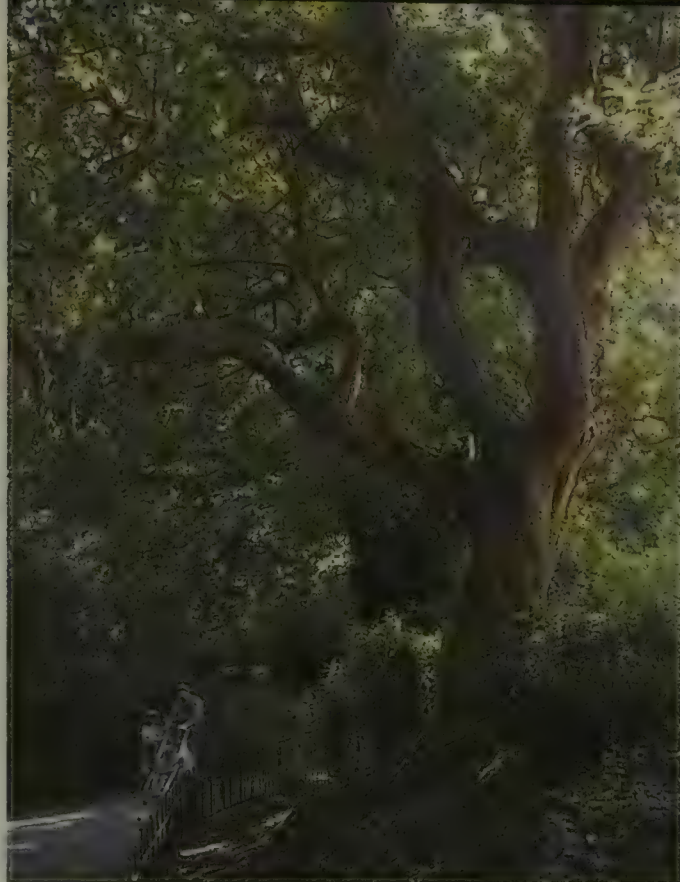
Baradero, Turnberry Quay—off Pepper Street, E14. 0171 537 1666. (tapas and wine £25; meal and wine £50). Café des Amis, 11-14 Hanover Place, off Long Acre, WC2. 0171 379 3444 (£50-£60). Café Spice Namaste, 247 Lavender Hill, SW11. 0171 738 1717. (evenings only £30-£40). Gaudi, 63 Clerkenwell Road, EC1. 0171 608 3220. (£36-£72). Grano, 162 Thames Road, Chiswick, W4. 0181 995 0120 (£50-£70). Lemonia, 89 Regents Park Road, NW1. 0171 586 7454. (£20-£30). Morton's the Restaurant, 28 Berkeley Square, W1. 0171 493 7171. (£100-£130). Museum Street Café, 47 Museum Street, WC1. 0171 405 3211. (lunch only: £35-£50). Riccardo's, 126 Fulham Road, SW3. 0171 370 4917. (£40-£50). Teca, 54 Brooks Mews, W1. 0171 495 4474 (£80-£120). Zafferano, 15 Lowndes Street, SW1. 0171 235 5800 (£50-£75). Prices given represent the approximate cost for two people including house wine.

Charles Champion is a Glenfiddich Restaurant Writer of the Year award winner and writes about food and restaurants for ES—the magazine of the London Evening Standard.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JONATHAN HARRIS





# LONDON IN LEAF

London without trees is unthinkable. Deirdre Shields reveals some schemes that are preserving the city's lungs.

**T**here are more trees than people in London, unlikely as that may sound. The London Tree Forum, which was formed in 1994 to provide the first strategic body for the city's trees, estimates that they number six million, not including those growing in gardens or woods.

Trees seem to touch everyone. They offer a reassuring sense of permanence—they are the longest-lived organisms on earth—and there is something very moving about the sight of ancient specimens growing in the urban jungle, looking like dignified old pensioners who no longer recognise the area in which they grew up.

London would be bereft without them. The city has thousands of different species, and some of the country's finest specimens, from Britain's tallest London Plane, beside the Thames at Richmond, to the Charlton House Mulberry at Charlton Village in SE7, which is thought to be the first of the species

planted in this country in 1608, on the order of King James I, who hoped to start a native silk industry.

Some are familiar landmarks, like the Wembley Elm, which stands outside The Greyhound pub on the corner of Harrow Road, and is a well known meeting point for people heading for Wembley Stadium. Possibly 100 years old, it is an unusual, as well as an imposing, sight. Such a good example of a mature elm is a rarity, following the ravages Dutch Elm Disease wrought on the country's elm population.

In the West End, the Dorchester's Plane queens it over Park Lane, looking every inch the star it is. Festooned with white lights, at night it outshines the rich and famous who visit the Dorchester. The hotel's Christmas card for 1931 shows it as a mere sapling, while today it covers much of the building's façade.

Other unusual trees can be found in the unlikely places. Just one example is the Lucombe Oak in

Rochampton which, at 32m, is the tallest of its kind in London. It is a fine specimen—and it stands in the middle of a high-rise housing estate.

All the above are Great Trees of London, which is a scheme run by the London Tree Forum. Rather like English Heritage's "blue plaque" scheme, which commemorates famous people in London, each Great Tree receives a green plaque—to date there are 32, and the number is increasing. Caroline Shepherdson, of the London Tree Forum, is encouraging people to nominate one—they can be either very old, big, an unusual shape, historically or culturally significant, associated with famous people or events, or of particular importance for wildlife.

London's trees face problems caused by pollution, according to Shepherdson—road salt is their worst enemy—but they also help the environment by soaking up carbon and other pollutants.

While we may be guilty of taking our trees for granted, there are encouraging signs that things are changing. Among those who have spoken up for London's trees recently are architect Richard Rogers, TV presenter John Craven, and actor Richard Wilson. Converting words into action, Michael Palin planted a tree to commemorate the original Gospel Oak, which stood in Kentish Town until lost to development at the turn of the century—it earned its moniker because famous preachers used to sermonise under it. The new oak is a shoot from one in Hatfield Park Estate, under which the future Elizabeth I was sitting when she received the news that she was queen.

Trees For London—set up in 1994 by a group of young Londoners frustrated by the lack of practical action for the capital's trees—has planted some 10,000. "There's no point imposing trees on an area," says the organisation's director, Graham Simmonds. "We find the best way is to get local people interested and involved." Recent tree-

planting projects include: providing a green barrier along the A102M, as it comes into the East End; enhancing a community garden in Tower Hamlets; and creating a nature garden on an estate near King's Cross. In each case, local people have embraced the scheme, nurturing "their" trees. There is also a Sponsor A Tree scheme, whereby for £35 you can have one planted in the London borough of your choice.

The new millennium has been siezed upon as a marvellous opportunity for doing more tree planting in London. The International Tree Foundation has collected 150 cuttings from a large Black Poplar which grows in Lewisham, near the Millennium Docklands site. The plan is to plant some 100 baby Black Poplars in the parkland surrounding the Dome this autumn.

The Millennium Tree Line project, run by the University of Greenwich, has an ambitious vision. Now in its fifth year, the project aims to create a living monument by planting a line of trees across England, and then the rest of the world, following the meridian line. The 260-mile treeline through England is set to be completed by 2001, with trees being planted at approximately quarter-mile intervals.

The London boroughs of Waltham Forest, Newham, Bromley and Walthamstow have taken up the scheme. Walthamstow has planted 50 trees although, as tree warden Mark Waters points out, it is impossible to plant exactly on the line.

London's trees provide a never-failing source of interest. So next time you're on a crowded street, raise your eyes from the pavement and look up and enjoy those trees.

□ **Great Trees of London**, c/o The London Tree Forum, PO Box 15146, London WC2B 6SJ. **Sponsor A Tree**, c/o Trees For London, HMS Belfast, London SE1 2JH, tel: 0171-407 0888. **The Millennium Tree Line**, c/o University of Greenwich, Dartford, Kent DA1 2SZ, tel: 0181-331 9694.



Top, a Strawberry Tree in Battersea Park. Above, Charter Oak in Danson Park, Bexley. Right, plaques mark London's great trees.



FROM STAGE TO SCREEN, GALLERIES TO CONCERT HALLS

## TOP TICKETS

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## THEATRE

Mark Rylance takes on the fairer sex when he plays *Cleopatra* at Shakespeare's Globe. Juliet Stevenson is confused by love in *Private Lives* and Simon Russell Beale is consumed by wealth in *Money*. Regent's Park has broad comedy with *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* while the Gottesloe offers the intense *Merchant of Venice*.

Addresses & telephone numbers are given on the first occasion a theatre's entry appears.

**Aunt Dan & Lemon.** Miranda Richardson, last seen in the theatre three years ago in Wallace Shawn's *The Designated Mourner*, returns to the stage for a revival of Shawn's challenging 1985 play. In what is essentially a series of languid monologues, Shawn questions conventional concepts of morality through the recollections of a sickly woman with Nazi sympathies & her intense childhood friendship with an American academic. American actress Glenn Headly co-stars. *Almeida Theatre, Almeida St, NI (0171-359 4404).*

**The Birthday Party.** Joe Harmon's deft handling of two short Pinter plays last year at the Donmar Warehouse makes him a welcome choice to direct Pinter's first full-length play, written in 1957. The sinister atmosphere builds in a seaside guest house as a reclusive lodger is menaced and humiliated by two strangers. Timothy West & Prunella Scales head the cast for this touring production. *Piccadilly Theatre, Drury St, WI (0171-369 1254).*

**Candide.** Since its debut on Broadway in 1956, few directors have managed to make Leonard Bernstein's comic opera, based on Voltaire's satire on mindless optimism, a wholly satisfying work. Trevor Nunn & John Caird now take up the challenge of melding the musical & darkly satirical elements involved in an 18th-century optimism's encounters with the horrors & inhumanity of the world. *Old Vic, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (0171-452 3000).*

**Julius Caesar.** The third repertory season at Shakespeare's Globe gets underway on

May 13 with his back-stabbing political drama, directed by Mark Rylance. Kathryn Hunter then directs a raucous *Comedy of Errors* (from May 28) with Marcello Magni as both Dromios. In an even more audacious piece of casting, Rylance appears as the Queen of the Nile in an all-male staging of *Antony & Cleopatra* (from July 24). Finally, the Globe's first commissioned play, Peter Oswald's verse drama *Augustine's Oak* (from Aug 6), is inspired by St Augustine's mission to convert the pagan English. The season runs until Sept 24. *Shakespeare's Globe, Bankside, SE1 (0171 401 9919).*

**Look Back in Anger.** "There aren't any brave causes left," rails John Osborne's anti-hero Jimmy Porter, which became a rallying cry for the Angry Young Men of the 1950s. Today, this watershed in British theatre seems rather formal & old-fashioned, but dynamic young actor Michael Sheen (last seen as Mozart in *Amadeus* at the Old Vic) may well bring a freshness to the play as Jimmy. Opens July 15. *Lyttelton, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (0171-452 3000).*

**The Merry Wives of Windsor.** "Let the sky rain potatoes," cries Falstaff after being repeatedly duped by two witty Windsor wives. Let's hope this is not an invitation for the heavens to open on the opening production of the *affetto* theatre season in Regent's Park, beginning on May 24. It's joined in repertory by *Twelfth Night* (from May 26) & Roy Hudd leading the cast of the *Sondheim* musical *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*.

**Mamma Mia!** The theatre acknowledges Abba's enduring appeal with this musical, about a mother & her bride-to-be daughter on holiday in the Mediterranean, which threads together 27 of the Swedish supergroup's songs. *Prince Edward, Old Crompton St, WI (0171-447 5400).*

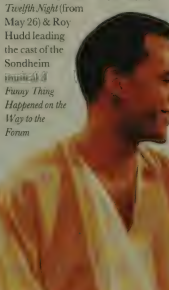
**The Merchant of Venice.** Stagings of *King Lear* & *Othello* at the National's studio-sized Gottesloe Theatre brought an invigorating intensity. Trevor Nunn has now chosen its confines for Shakespeare's ever-controversial



**Mamma Mia!** stars Lisa Stoke and 27 Abba songs. **Suddenly Last Summer:** with Rachel Weiss.

drama. The versatile Henry Goodman, last seen in the West End as the witty lawyer in the musical *Chicago*, is Shylock, with Derbhle Crotty as Portia. Opens June 17. *Centrale, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (0171-452 3000).*

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THEATRE



THEATRE

(from July 20. The season runs until Sept 4. *Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park, NI (0171-466 2431).*

**Money.** Edward Balcer-Lytton's 1840 drawing-room farce is notable for being one of the few plays of its day to satirise the social double standards of bourgeois life. In this rare staging, Simon Russell Beale plays an impoverished young scholar whose sudden large inheritance leads

him to being chased by fortune-hunters & sycophants. With Denis Quilley & Victoria Hamilton. Opens June 3. *Old Vic, National Theatre.*



**Macbeth.** Rufus Sewell, above, in more bubble, bubble than he can handle?

**The RSC season at Stratford:** includes, right, "A Midsummer Night's Dream".

**Plenty.** David Hare's 1978 play explores the collapse of British post-war ideals from 1943 to the mid-Sixties, through the increasing mental instability of an Englishwoman & former French Resistance worker. Rising film star Gae Billech takes the challenging central role, with Julian Wadham as her increasingly embarrassed civil servant husband. Until July 10. *Barry, St Martin's.*



*Lane, WC2 (0171-369 1740).*  
**The Prisoner of Second Avenue.** Following in the footsteps of Kevin Spacey & Nicole Kidman, Hollywood stars Richard Dreyfuss & Marsha Mason tread the boards in this 1971 tragic-comedy by Mason's ex-husband, Neil Simon. Dreyfuss plays a sacked advertising executive who is overwhelmed by the pressures of modern urban life & Mason is his long-suffering wife. Until July 17. *Theatre Royal, Haymarket.*

**Troilus and Cressida:** Trevor Nunn's production fails black Trojans against white Greeks.

*SW1 (0171 930 8800).*  
**Private Lives.** The centenary of Noel Coward's birth has prompted a cascade of Coward revivals of which Philip Frank's production sounds the most promising. The playwright's 1930 play, about two divorcees who find themselves in adjoining honeymoon suites with their new partners, is not only an acerbic, witty comedy but also a perceptive look at love & marriage. Juliet Stevenson & Anton Lesser star. *Lyttelton, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (0171-452 3000).*  
**The Real Thing.** David Leveaux directs a major revival of Tom Stoppard's 1982 play about a playwright who leaves his actress wife for another actress whose husband is the star of his latest drama. Although this is a multi-layered meditation on





the relationship between art & life, Stoppard's play also has heart. Opens June 2. *Donmar Warehouse, Earlham St. WC2 (0171-369 1732).*

**Sleep with Me.** Hanif Kureishi follows his controversial novel about marital breakdown, *Intimacy*, with his first play for 15 years. Set during a summer weekend in the country, it dissects the chaotic emotional lives of a group of friends. Anthony Page is a sensitive director of tense relationships, as shown by his stagings of *Three Tall Women* & *A Doll's House*, & he has a strong cast in Penny Downie, Jonathan Hyde & Adrian Lukis. *Cottesloe, National Theatre.*

**Suddenly Last Summer.** Torrid passion, repressed sexuality & concealed pasts are always undercurrents in Tennessee Williams's work, & none more so than in this 1958 drama. Set in 1930s New Orleans, it's the macabre story of how a faded Southern belle (Sheila Gish), who blames her disturbed niece (Rachel Weisz) for the death of the former's adored son, seeks bitter revenge. Until July 17. *Comedy, Panton St. SW1 (0171-369 1731).*

**Three Sisters.** As artistic director of the Bush Theatre, Dominic Dromgoole showed himself to be a master of nuance. Such skill should benefit his Oxford Stage Company production of Chekhov's tragic-comedy in which the action is defined by the shifting moods of the central characters as they yearn to return to Moscow. May 25-July 3. *Whitehall Theatre, Whitehall, SW1 (0171-369 1755).*

**Troilus & Cressida.** Shakespeare's anti-heroic satire on love & war is given an epic sweep by Trevor Nunn without losing the intimate detail. Played out in a striking amphitheatre of red soil, Nunn pits black Trojans against white Greeks which suggests a cultural as well as political divide. Although some of the cast seem uneasy with the verse, Nunn still pulls off an absorbing production, with eye-catching performances by Sophie Okonedo as Cressida & Roger Allam as a wonderfully caustic Ulysses. Until July 24. *Olivier, National Theatre.*

**RSC SEASON AT STRATFORD:** *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with Josette Simon & Nicholas Jones, directed by Michael Boyd; *Othello*, directed by Michael Attenborough, with Ray Fearon & Zoe Waites; *Antony & Cleopatra*, with Alan Bates & Frances de la Tour, directed by Steven Pimlott, opens June 23; *Timon of Athens*, with Alan Bates, directed by Gregory Doran, opens Aug 11. At the Swan: *Volpone* by Ben Jonson, directed by Lindsay Posner; *Tales from Ovid* by Ted Hughes, directed by Tim Supple; *The Family Reunion* by TS Eliot, directed by Adrian Noble, opens June 16. At the Other Place: *Oroonoko* by Aphra Behn, directed by Gregory Doran; *Don Carlos* by Friedrich Schiller, opens June 15; *A Warwickshire Testimony*, a new play by April de Angelis, opens Aug 12, directed by Alison Sutcliffe. Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwicks CV37 6BB (01789 295623).

IAN JOHNS



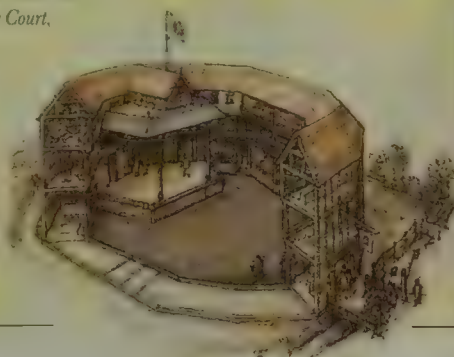
## The Rose Theatre reborn

The greatest period of English drama has been brought to life in Southwark, on the site of The Rose playhouse where William Shakespeare witnessed the first London production of his tragedy *Titus Andronicus*.

The foundations of The Rose, which was built by Philip Henslowe in 1587 and demolished in 1606, came to public notice four centuries later during archaeological excavations in 1989. Excitement escalated as the significance emerged of these remains, a stone's throw from the equally important Elizabethan theatre The Globe and at the heart of the teeming, licentious world of 16th-century theatreland.

For their safekeeping, the surviving pieces of the building were reburied beneath layers of sand, concrete and water. Now, 10 years on, the historic site has been opened to the public, to help raise money for further excavation. Although the original stones are still encased in their protective coverings, some distinctly 20th-century lighting techniques bring ghostly outlines of Henslowe's playhouse floating above the site of the stage where Marlowe, Jonson and Kyd heard their lines spoken and where Shakespeare himself is almost certain to have acted. While the voice of Ian McKellen recounts the theatre's star-studded history. *Rose Theatre, Rose Court, 2 Southwark Bridge, SE1 (0171-207 6280). Daily 10am-5pm. £3, children £2. Joint tickets that include guided tours of Shakespeare's Globe auditorium are also available.*

ANGELA BIRD



## CINEMA

**A**mong Hollywood's summer salvo of big-budget blockbusters, Sean Connery's *Entrapment* is more intriguing than usual. Character-driven dramas are also encouragingly in evidence with *A Simple Plan* & *Snow Falling on Cedars*, while Julia Roberts looks set to become the queen of romantic comedy with *Notting Hill* & *The Runaway Bride*. Already dubbed the film event of the year, however, is the new *Star Wars* movie. **The Force is with us once again in July.**

**Among Giants.** This amiable drama features the ever-reliable Pete Postlethwaite as the middle-aged leader of a team painting a line of electricity pylons between two Yorkshire mill towns, who falls unexpectedly in love with a young Australian hitchhiker (Rachel

Griffiths). Although scriptwriter Simon Beaufoy's drama has similar earthy heroes & the same Sheffield setting as his earlier film, *The Full Monty*, this doesn't quite achieve the same level of passion & humour. Opens June 4.

**Celebrity.** Woody Allen stays behind the camera for this caustic comedy on fame & the media, but his usual obsessions about mid-life crises, creative blocks & relationship problems are still there. Stylishly shot in black-&-white, it follows the amorous misadventures of a journalist (Kenneth Branagh, bizarrely imitating Allen's neurotic mannerisms) as he pursues New York's Beautiful People. Cameo appearances by the likes of Leonardo DiCaprio, Melanie Griffith & Winona Ryder enliven a patchy effort. Opens June 18.

**Entrapment.** Hollywood-based British director Jon Amiel has proven himself adept at a variety of genres,



**Celebrity:** *Kenneth Branagh and Leonardo DiCaprio in Woody Allen's latest offering.*

from romances (*Sommersby*) to thrillers (*Copycat*). Now he combines the two for a caper movie in which master thief Sean Connery plans to rob a world bank on the night before the new millennium. Catherine Zeta Jones co-stars as an undercover insurance agent who succumbs to his charms. Opens June 11.

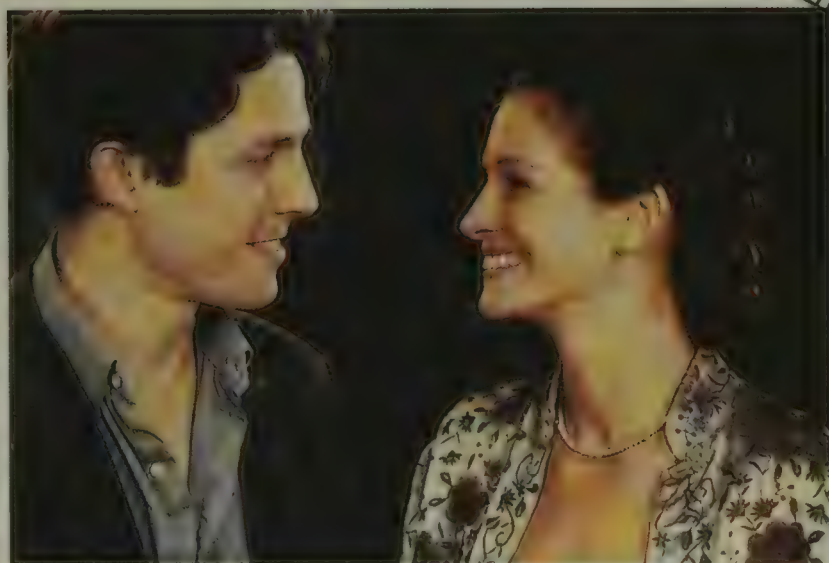
**The Mummy.** While a former Foreign Legion soldier (Brendan Fraser) & his girlfriend (Rachel Weisz) are working on a 1930s archaeological dig near the pyramids, they accidentally awaken the body of a vengeful Egyptian priest. *Indiana Jones*-style action-adventure meets Hammer horror in a big-budget zombie yarn. Opens June 25.

**Notting Hill.** As shown by the Camden setting of *This Year's Love*, seen earlier this year, London seems to be the favourite site for romantic comedy. The team behind *Four Weddings & a Funeral* head for west London for their new film, where Hugh Grant's divorced bookshop

owner finds his world turned upside down when he falls in love with a famous actress, played by Julia Roberts. Opens May 28.

**Pushing Tin.** Jealousy & professional rivalry in the work place can become a dangerous affair, especially when you happen to be overworked air-traffic controllers who are "pushing tin" (ie guiding hundreds of planes into New York's three major airports). This is the basis of a comedy-drama by the creators of TV's *Cheers*, with John Cusack as a controller who is sleeping with the wife of his maverick rival (Billy Bob Thornton). Opens Aug 6.

**The Runaway Bride.** Director Garry Marshall is reunited with his *Pretty Woman* stars Richard Gere & Julia Roberts for another romantic



comedy. Roberts plays a woman who has been jilted at the altar by a succession of husbands-to-be. Gere is the reporter sent to write her story. Opens Aug 6.

**A Simple Plan.** An engrossing, character-driven thriller in which two brothers (Bill Paxton & Billy Bob Thornton) discover \$4 million in a crashed plane in snowbound Minnesota. They hastily concoct a

plan to keep it, which leads to greed, paranoia, sibling rivalry & murder. Superb central performances & eerie winterscapes combine to create a chilling morality tale. Opens May 21.

**Snow Falling on Cedars.** Based on David Guterson's bestselling novel, this murder mystery is set in an isolated fishing community on America's Northern Pacific coast in the 1950s. When a Japanese-American is accused of murder, the

**Notting Hill:** *Unlikely romance blossoms between Hugh Grant and Julia Roberts.*

case exposes prejudice & corruption, as well as provoking mixed feelings for a journalist (Ethan Hawke) & an elderly defence attorney (Max von Sydow). Opens June 4.

★ HIGHLIGHT ★

**Star Wars: Episode I—The Phantom Menace.** This is probably the most eagerly anticipated film of the year. Sixteen years after *Return of the Jedi* concluded the middle trilogy of George Lucas's *Star Wars* saga, comes the first of three new films which reveal the early lives of the original characters. Ewan McGregor plays the young Obi Wan Kenobi (Alec Guinness in the original films), with Liam Neeson as a Jedi master. Expect thrills & humour. Opens July 16.

**The Mummy:** *Indiana Jones-style action-adventure among the pyramids—with a zombie priest to boot.*



**A Simple Plan:** *A \$4 million discovery leads to murder in Minnesota.*

KELCH HANSHIRE

ALLEN RAYSON





## OPERA

A major summer attraction will be the first visit to London of the Bolshoi Opera from Moscow. English National Opera stages Poulenc's powerful drama *The Carmelites*, which is based on a novel by Georges Bernanos. The Royal Opera offers a week of Verdi concert performances. Out of town, Garsington gives the first British production of Strauss' *Die Liebe der Danae*; Glyndebourne mounts new productions of Debussy's *Pelléas & Mélisande* & Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*; & they are joined by a new country house opera company at The Grange in Hampshire.

### ★ HIGHLIGHT ★

**Bolshoi Opera.** On its first ever visit to London, the company presents its famed production of the original version of Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* (Aug 3-5) and *The Love for Three Oranges*, Prokofiev's comedy, based on the play by Gozzi, in Peter Ustinov's witty, inventive staging (Aug 7, m&c). *London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-632 8300).*

**English Touring Opera:** The season includes, above, a sparky new translation of Donizetti's "*The Daughter of the Regiment*" and, below, a powerful "*Macbeth*".

*London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-632 8300).*

**The Carmelites.** Phyllida Lloyd makes her ENO debut directing Poulenc's powerful drama of faith & fear set in a convent in revolutionary France. Joan Rodgers sings Sister Blanche, the young nun who overcomes her fear to join her sisters in death under the guillotine. Paul Daniel conducts. May 20, 22, 26, 29, June 1, 3, 8, 10.

**Carmen.** American mezzo-soprano Phyllis Panchella makes her company debut in the title role, to be followed on June 5 by Sally Burgess, who previously made a huge impact as the doomed gypsy. Alan Woodrow sings Don José, with Sandra Ford as Micaëla & Robert Salvatori as Escamillo in Jonathan Miller's vivid staging. May 19, 27, June 2, 7, 11, 15, 18, 23, 25, 28, 30, July 2.

**Semele.** Harry Bicket conducts & Robert Carsen



ANDREW L.

**ENO: Phyllida Lloyd makes her ENO debut directing Poulenc's "*The Carmelites*".**

directs Handel's opera to a libretto by Congreve, with Rosemary Joshua in the title role. May 21, 25, 28.

**Rigoletto.** The season ends with Jonathan Miller's historic updating of Verdi's opera from the court of the 15th-century Duke of Mantua to the dangerous world of Little Italy in 1950s New York. Keith Latham sings the title role, here portrayed as an embittered barman, Margaret Richardson is his daughter

Gilda, John Hudson is the Duke, and Noel Davies conducts. June 4, 9, 12, 14, 17, 19, 21, 24, 26, 29, July 1, 3.

*Peacock Theatre, Portugal St, WC2 (0171-314 8800).*

**The Daughter of the Regiment.** Kit Hesketh Harvey's new translation of Donizetti's comedy; with Anna-Clare Monk and Olafur Sigurdarson as Sergeant Sulpice. June 5.

**Macbeth.** Verdi's first Shakespearean opera, with John Fletcher/Anthony Marber as Macbeth. Annicka Andersson/Sarah Rhodes as Lady Macbeth. June 2, 4.

*Holland Park Theatre, W8 (0171-602 7856).*

**Rigoletto.** Kate Brown directs; Oliver Gilmour conducts. June 8, 9, 11, 12 (m&c), 15-19.

**L'Elisir d'amore.** Production by European Chamber Opera, directed by Terry John Bates. June 22-25, 26 (m&c), 29, July 1, 2, 3 (m&c).

**Le nozze di Figaro.** Tom Hawkes directs, Peter Rice designs, Cern Mansur conducts. July 13-16, 17 (m&c).

**Orpheus in the Underworld.** John Abulafia directs Mecklenburgh Opera's production of Offenbach's romp. July 20-23, 24 (m&c).

**The Consul.** Simon Callow directs Menotti's opera about a woman's efforts to secure a visa to escape from a bureaucratic regime. July 27-31.



ABOVE AND BELOW: STEPHEN VAUGHAN



**La Bohème.** Tom Hawkes directs Central Festival Opera's production; John Gibbons conducts. Aug 3-6, 7 (m&c), 10-13, 14 (m&c).

*Festival Hall, South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242).*

**Verdi Week.** The Royal Opera presents a week of works by Verdi, opening with the *Requiem*, conducted by music director Bernard Haitink. May 30 & June 1. Maurizio Benini conducts two concert performances of Verdi's second opera, *Un giorno di regno*, with a cast that includes the Russian baritone Vladimir Chernov. Greek soprano Irene Tsirakidis, & American mezzo Susanne Mentzer. May 31 & June 2. Edward Downes conducts a chronological survey of Verdi's operatic career, consisting of excerpts from seven of his operas from *Nabucco* to *La forza del destino*. Soloists include sopranos Elena Kelessidi & Julia Varady. June 8. Also introductory talks & study afternoons. OUT OF TOWN

*Garsington Manor, Garsington, Oxon (01865 361636).*

**Die Entführung aus dem Serail.** Garsington's garden setting will conjure up the palace of the Pasha Selim in Mozart's singspiel, to be directed by Stephen Unwin & conducted by Stephen Barlow. June 14, 19, 25, 30, July 3, 6, 10.

**L'Italiana in Algeri.** American tenor Bradley Williams & Spanish baritone Carlos Marin make their UK debuts as Lindoro & Taddeo in Rossini's comedy, with Silva Tro Santafe as Isabella. Michael McCaffery directs, Charles Peebles conducts. June 15, 20, 24, 27, July 2, 7, 9.

**Die Liebe der Danae.** Strauss' opera concerns one of the many

amorous adventures enjoyed by the god Jupiter, sung by Peter Coleman-Wright, with a mortal woman, Danae, sung by Orla Boylan. David Fielding directs & designs, Elgar Howarth conducts. June 26, 29, July 1, 4, 8, 11.

*Glyndebourne, Lewes, E Sussex (01273 813813).*

**Pelléas & Mélisande.** New production of Debussy's poetic masterpiece by Graham Vick, conducted by Andrew Davis, with Christiane Oelze as Mélisande, Richard Croft as Pelléas, John Tomlinson as Golaud, Gwynne Howell as Arkel. May 21, 23, 28, 30, June 3, 5, 8, 11, 17, 20, 24, July 1.

**Rodelinda.** Last year's production, set in the 1920s, returns with Lisa Milne singing the title role; Charles Mackerras conducts. June 13, 16, 19, 22, 25, 27, July 2, 10, 12, 15, 18, 20, 23.

**Manon Lescaut.** Adina Nătescu again sings the wayward heroine in Graham Vick's staging, with Mikhail Dawidoff as des Grieux & Vassily

Gerello as Lescaut. July 3, 8, 11, 14, 17, 21, 24, 29, Aug 1, 7, 10, 13, 17, 20.

**The Bartered Bride.** New production by Nikolaus Lehnhoff, designed by Tobias Hoheisel, conducted by Jiri Kout, with Solveig Kringelborn as Marenka, Kim Begley as Jenik, Wolfgang Ablinger Sperrhake as Vasek, Kurt Rydl as Kecal. July 25, 28, 31, Aug 3, 6, 8, 12, 15, 18, 22, 24, 27, 29.

**Flight.** Jonathan Dove's entertaining & thought-provoking opera, first staged last autumn by Glyndebourne's touring company, is set among a group of passengers who find themselves stranded in an airport lounge when their flight is delayed. It explores their personal problems and the effect of their being thrown together for a few hours. Aug 14, 16, 19, 21, 23, 26, 28.

*The Grange, Northampton, Hants (0171-246 7567).*

**The Barber of Seville.** Quentin Hayes sings the title role, with Nerys Jones as Rosina & Agustin Prunell-

Strauss' bitter-sweet period score, set in Vienna, in Francisco Negrin's staging, with Robert Hayward as Mandryka; Elgar Howarth conducts. May 22, June 15, 19, 25.

*Theatre Royal, Glasgow (0141-332 9000).*

**Inés de Castro.** Richard Armstrong conducts the first revival of James MacMillan's opera, with Helen Field singing the title role of the Spanish lover of the Prince of Portugal when their two countries were at war. May 27, June 1, 5, 10.

**Aida.** Antony McDonald's production with Lada Biriucov as Aida, Vladimir Kuzmenko as Radames, Rosalind Plowright as Amneris. May 29, June 3, 8, 12.

*New Theatre, Cardiff (01222 878889).*

**Cavalleria rusticana & Pagliacci.**

**Glyndebourne Festival Opera:** The season includes "Manon Lescaut", with Adina Nătescu as the wayward heroine.



## Opera North:

Ruby Philogene sings the title role of the doomed gypsy, in "Carmen".



Friend as Almaviva, in a production by Emma Jenkins, conducted by Marco Zambelli. July 3, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 18.

**L'Heure espagnole/The Breasts of Tiresias.** Lionel Friend conducts this Ravel/Poulenc double bill & Stewart Laing is director & designer. July 4, 6, 8, 10, 14, 16.

*Grand Theatre, Leeds (0113-222 6222).*

**Carmen.** Phyllida Lloyd directs Bizet's most popular work with Ruby Philogene singing the title role, Antoni Garfield Henry as Don José. May 21.

**Arabella.** Susannah Glanville sings the heroine in Richard

Casts include Dennis O'Neill/Bonaventura Bottone as Turiddu, Katja Lytting as Santuzza; Dennis O'Neill/David Rendall as Canio, Rosalind Sutherland as Nedda; Julian Smith/Carlo Rizzi conducts. May 22, 28; June 4.

**The Magic Flute.** Toby Spence sings Tamino, with Franzita Whelan as Pamina, Andrew Shore as Papageno, Andrew Greenan as Sarastro. May 27, June 3.

**Tristan und Isolde.** Jeffrey Lawton & Mary Lloyd Davies sing the title roles in Yannis Kokkos's fine production. June 1, 5.





## DANCE

**T**he dance event of the summer will be the return visit to London after an absence of 10 years of the Bolshoi Ballet with six full-length ballets. The Royal Ballet presents four programmes at Sadler's Wells, including the world premiere of William Tuckett's *The Turn of the Screw*, set to music by Audreij Panufik. The Wells will also be host to companies from the Netherlands & USA. English National revives its *Swan Lake* at the Albert Hall. Northern Ballet Theatre tours three full-length dance dramas inspired by Christopher Gable, its late artistic director.

## ★ HIGHLIGHT ★

**Bolshoi Ballet.** Ballerinas can feast on six of the company's full-length ballets, starting with its Irish production of *La Bayadère*, July 6-7, 16, 17 (mke); Vladimir Vassilev's new version of *Giselle* performed with Paganini, set to music by Rachmaninov, July 9, 10 (mke); Yuri Grigorovich's spectacular *Spartacus*, July 12-13, 22-23, 29 (mke); the full-length *Rhapsodia*, July 19-21, Vassilev's *Swan Lake*, July 26, 27 (mke); Petipa's *Dan Quixote*, July 28-30, 31 (mke). *Coliseum*, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-632 8390).

**English National Ballet.** See the arena of the Albert Hall transformed into a huge magical lake for Tchaikovsky's great classic, *Swan Lake*.

Derek Drane's production in-the-round features 70 swans, plus acrobats, jugglers & fire-eaters. The company's Estonian stars Agnes Oaks & Thomas Edur alternate in dancing the lead roles of Odette/Odile & Prince Siegfried with Margaret Ilmami & Patrick Armand & ENB's own principals, June 16-26. *Albert Hall, Kensington Gore*, SW7 (0171-589 8212).

**Nederlands Dans Theater 1.** Jiri Kylian brings his innovative company of 32 dancers back to London with a multiple bill that displays its scope and virtuosity. It includes the UK premiere of Hans van Manen's *Fantasia* & Paul Lightfoot's *Still Life*, also Kylian's own *Falling Angels* & *Symphony of Psalms*, June 14-17. *Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, ECI* (0171-863 9000).

**Rambert Dance Company.** Programme one: *Thin Green, Four Leaf* Rafal Bonachela danced to a combination of live & recorded violas, to music by David Byrne. Jeremy James' *Gaps, Laps & Relaps*, to music by Peter Morris, & Christopher Bruce's *Boomer*, to music by the Rolling Stones, May 18-21, 22 (mke). Programme two: *Crut Garden*, Christopher Bruce & Lindsay Kemp's full-length ballet evoking the life & work of the Spanish poet Federico Garcia Lorca, to live music by Carlos Miranda, May 23-29, *Sadler's Wells*.

**Royal Ballet.** The company presents four programmes: Peter Wright's *Giselle*, July 6-8, 14-16, 17 (mke); triple bill: Ashley Page's *Fearful Symmetries*, MacMillan's *My Brother*,

**Spartacus:** Yuri Klevstov and Anna Palsina in one of six full-length ballets performed by the Bolshoi this summer.

*My Sister*, Mark Baldwin's *Towards Poetry*, July 9, 10 (mke); 12, 13; Ashton's *Odette*, to music by Henze, July 19-22, 27, 30, 31 (mke); triple bill: Balanchine's *Serenade*, William Tuckett's *The Turn of the Screw*, Ashton's *Rhapsodia*, July 23-24 (mke), 26, 28 (mke); 29, *Sadler's Wells*.

**Scottish Ballet.** The company returns to London after an absence of 23 years with a mixed bill entitled *night life*, comprising MacMillan's 1961 ballet *Discipline*, redesigned by Philip Prowse, & works by Tim Rushion & Lila York, June 3, 4, 5 (mke). *Sadler's Wells*.

**White Oak Dance Project.** In its 10th-anniversary year, the company formed by Mikhail Baryshnikov & Mark Morris presents a new work by the Australian choreographer Lucy Queen, to be danced by Baryshnikov, Mark Morris' *The Argonauts*, Trisha Brown's *Glacial Drift*, featuring décor by Robert Rauschenberg, *Dance with Three Dots & a Pulse* by the kabuki artist Tamaoaburo Hando, June 9-12. *Sadler's Wells*.



**The Royal Ballet:** Victoria Durante dances "Odette", above, and Jonathan Cope, left, is Albrecht in "Giselle", at Sadler's Wells.

**Swan Lake:** English National Ballet's spectacular production at the Albert Hall.



June 29, 30, SECC, Glasgow (0141-267 7777), July 2, 3, Sheffield Arena (0114-236 5636), July 6, 7, Manchester Evening News Arena (0161-930 8000), July 9, 10, Birmingham National Indoor Arena (0121-200 2222).

**Northern Ballet Theatre.** The company's summer tour comprises three full-length dance dramas. *Cinderella*, choreographed & directed by Christopher Gable, May 25-29, *Thouart Royal, Newcastle* (0191-232 2061), *Dracula*, a powerful work of total theatre created by Christopher Gable & choreographer Michael Pink, to music by Philip Feeney, June 8-12, *Grand Theatre, Leeds* (0113-222 6222), June 15-19, *Thouart Royal, Glasgow* (0141-332 9000). *Comes*, based on a scenario by Christopher Gable with choreography by Didi Veldman, it is danced to an arrangement of Bizet's operatic score, June 22-26, *Nottingham Theatre, Nottingham* (0131-529 0000), June 29-July 3, *New Theatre, Cardiff* (01222 878889).

**Rambert Dance Company.** Christopher Bruce's *Four Scenes & Ghost Dances* with Twyla Tharp's *The Golden Section*, June 24-26, *Theatre Royal, Norwich* (01603 630000).

## MUSIC

The Barbican welcomes the Kirov Opera & the St Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra under their charismatic conductors Gergiev & Temirkanov. Overseas visitors are, as usual, a feature of the Proms, which also include many first performances, some works commissioned by the BBC, commemorations of anniversaries & such innovations as film music &



Irish music, plus a whole day devoted to 1,000 years of music. Night owls will appreciate the 10pm concerts & early birds will be attracted by the daytime chamber music series at the Victoria & Albert Museum.

**Kingsley Gore, SW7** (0171-589 8212). **BBC Promenade Concerts.** Night owls will appreciate the 10pm concerts & early birds will be attracted by the daytime chamber music series at the Victoria & Albert Museum. Overseas visitors are, as usual, a feature of the Proms, which also include many first performances, some works commissioned by the BBC, commemorations of anniversaries & such innovations as film music & Irish music, plus a whole day devoted to 1,000 years of music. Night owls will appreciate the 10pm concerts & early birds will be attracted by the daytime chamber music series at the Victoria & Albert Museum.

**Collegium Musicae 90 Choir & Orchestra.** Richard Hickox conducts Mozart's *Exsultate, Jubilate* & Symphony No 41 (Jupiter), Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, July 24, 8pm. **100 Years of Film Music.** Carl Davis with Maurice Jarre & George Fenton conduct the BBC Concert Orchestra, with Lord Atterborough as presenter, introducing a new

element into the season. July 31, 8pm. **Opéra National du Rhin** gives a semi-staged performance of Poulenc's opera *Les Dialogues des Carmélites*, conducted by Jan Latham-Koenig, one of several concerts marking the composer's centenary, Aug 4, 7pm. **Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, London Voices.** Simon Rattle conducts Bernstein's musical *Wonderful Town*, Aug 10. **Anúna**, the traditional/pop choral group of *Heavenly Harp*, with Liam O'Flynn & the Piper's Gall Band, play Irish music, Aug 12, 10pm. **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.** Sakari Oramo conducts Schubert's Violin Concerto, with Sarah Chang. Nielsen's Symphony No 4 'The Inextinguishable', Aug 13, 7pm. **European Union Youth Orchestra.** Bernard Haitink conducts Mahler's Symphony No 7, Aug 18. **BBC Big Band.** Barry Forgie conducts a

...are coming:  
Yuri Temirkanov conducts the St Petersburg Philharmonic in June.

## The Russians...

Valery Gergiev, directs the Kirov Opera in "Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk" and "The Queen of Spades" at The Barbican.

centenary tribute to Duke Ellington, with Clark Terry, trumpet, & Wayne Marshall, piano, Aug 19, 10pm. **BBC Symphony Orchestra & Chorus.** Bernard Haitink conducts Mahler's Symphony No 3, Aug 23. **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.** Shostakovich's Symphony No 6, Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, Aug 24. Beethoven's *Overture: Lohengrin* No 3, Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben*, conducted by Mariss Jansons, Aug 25. **Orchestra Revolutionnaire & Romantique, Monteverdi Choir.** John Eliot Gardiner conducts Schumann's *Scenes from Goethe's Faust*, Aug 28. **Glyndebourne Festival Opera.** For its annual visit to the Proms, Andrew Davis conducts a semi-staged performance of Debussy's *Pelléas & Mélisande* with the festival cast, Aug 30, 7pm.

**Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.** Simon Rattle conducts works by Ravel & Beethoven's Symphony No 6 (Pastoral), Sept 6. Kurtág's *Gondoliers* by Stefan Mader's Symphony No 2 (Resurrection), Sept 7. **Bavarian State Orchestra.** Zubin Mehta conducts Richard Strauss' *Don Juan*, Four Last Songs, An Alpine Symphony, Sept 8, 7pm; Chopin's Piano Concerto No 1, with Evguen Kissin, Bruckner's Symphony No 8, Sept 9.







**London Symphony Orchestra & Chorus.** Colin Davis conducts Mozart's Piano Concerto No 27, with Alfred Brendel, Beethoven's Symphony No 9 (Chorus), Sept 10. **BBC Symphony Orchestra, Chorus & Singers.** Andrew Davis conducts the traditional last night, which features Poulenc, Vaughan Williams, Willard White, bass, in operatic aria & Kerr's *Of Mice, Men*, & the usual favourites for audience participation. Sept 11. Full details of the 70 concerts in the 1999 BBC Proms Guide, June on sale.

See N. ECL (0171-630 8891).

**London Symphony Orchestra.** Colin Davis conducts concert performances of Verdi's *Otello*, with José Cura singing the title role. Andrea Danks as Desdemona, Carlos Alvarez as Iago. May 20 & 23, 7pm. Antonio Pappano conducts two concertos: Beethoven's First (Orchestra) & Verdi's *Clara* Concerto, with Andrew Marriner, Brahms' Symphony No 1, May 26; Bernstein's Three Dances from *On the Town*. Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No 2, with Yefim Bronfman, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*. June 2, 7.30pm.

**Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.** Daniele Gatti conducts Berg's *Altenberg Lieder*, with Christine Schäfer. Berg's *Lulu Suite*. Brahms' Symphony No 4, June 3, 7.30pm. **St Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra.** Music director Yuri Temirkanov conducts Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, June 9; Shostakovich's *Hairs of the New Moon*. Sokolov's Symphony No 7 (Leningrad), June 11, 7.30pm.

**Mozart/Strauss Series.** Bernard Haitink conducts the LSO in three programmes comprising Piano Concertos Nos 21, 18 & 9, with Andreas Schill, & Richard Strauss' *Don Quixote*, also opening *Zarathustra*, & An Alpine Symphony. June 10, 13.22.23. Joseph Sweeney conducts the Scottish Chamber Orchestra in Mozart's Symphony No 31 (Paris). Piano Concerto No 23, with Andreas Haefliger. Strauss' *Metamorphosen*.



## Orchestral manoeuvres

Tucked away down a back street, less than 5 minutes' walk from Waterloo Station in the heart of the South Bank area is London's newest concert hall. Called The Warehouse, it is not a rival to the capital's existing auditoria, but offers an intimate recital room, with flexible seating for up to 100 people, where concert-goers can enjoy a convivial evening of music, refreshments and conversation.

As its name suggests, The Warehouse is a converted commercial building. Or rather two Victorian warehouses, whose original architecture has been preserved, their development approved by English Heritage. The interior consists of two studios, purpose-designed to achieve the highest acoustic specifications, which are already being put to good use by the London Festival Orchestra, who have adopted the Warehouse as their headquarters. The new venue was inaugurated early this year with a Celebrity Series of concerts, given at monthly intervals on Saturday evenings, and continuing until the end of 1999. Those consist of a chamber music recital, a reception with buffet, and a chance for the audience to intermingle and meet the musicians. A second series of Afterlunch Concerts is launched on May 19 by the London Festival Orchestra under its artistic director Ross Pople. The Wednesday night events, which will also run monthly until the end of the year, are devoted to music from the chamber repertoire ranging from Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, to Bach violin sonatas, to songs from the *Aurynge*, and include aperitifs and refreshments. *The Warehouse, 13 Ward Street, London SE1 (0171-928 9251).*

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June 24; 7.30pm. **Kirov Opera.** The company's artistic director, Valery Gergiev, conducts concert performances of two concertos of the modern & romantic Russian repertoire. Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtensk*, with Larissa Shevchenko as Katerina, Yuri Marusin as Sergei, June 14; Tchaikovsky's *The Queen of Spades*, with Vladimir Galuzin as Hermann, Galina Gorshakova as Lisa. June 15; 7.30pm. **London Symphony Orchestra.** Mstislav Rostropovich conducts

Britain's Violin Concerto, with Maxim Vengerov. Prokofiev's Symphony No 6, June 27, John Eliot Gardiner conducts Strauss' *Till Eulenspiegel* & Symphony in Three Movements. Weill's *Scores Daily* site & Broadway songs, performed by Susan Graham, July 4; Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*, Boulanger's *De fond de l'église*, Ravel's *Daphnis & Chloé*

Suite No 2, July 8; 7.30pm. **Ellington Centenary.** To mark the centenary of the birth of Duke Ellington, Wynton Marsalis & the Lincoln Centre Jazz Orchestra present a big band programme featuring the Duke & his contemporaries, June 29, 7.30pm; they join with the LSO to perform Ellington's original interpretation of Grieg's *Porgy and Bess*, with new arrangements of Ellington for jazz band & symphony orchestra, June 30, 7.30pm; Jessye Norman, soprano, sings a selection of Ellington's sacred songs, July 29, 7.45pm. **Ravi Shankar** is joined by his 18-year-old daughter Anoushka Shankar to give a recital on sitar, July 9, 7.30pm.

See N. ECL (0171-630 8891).

**South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242).** **Berlioz Series.** Valery Gergiev conducts the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra & the Philharmonia Orchestra in concert performances of three of Berlioz's major compositions: *Benvenuto Cellini*, May 19; *Roméo & Juliet*, May 22; *La Damnation de Faust*, May 25, 7.30pm. **Elgar Series.** Richard Hickox conducts the Philharmonia Orchestra in three concerts devoted to Elgar: Cello Concerto, with Truls Mork.

**Jan Bostridge**, tenor, Julius Drake, piano. Lieder by Schubert & Wolf, June 3, 5, 7.30pm.

**Louise Winter**, mezzo-soprano, Gerald Finley, baritone, Julia Drake, piano. The songs of Henri Duparc, June 9, 7.30pm. **Chilstring Quartet.** Grieg, Haydn, Ravel, June 12, 7.30pm. **The English Concert.** Nancy Argent, soprano. Trevor Pinnock directs songs, aria in chamber music by Purcell & Handel, June 17, 7.30pm. **The Lindsayays.** Haydn & Mendelssohn string quartets, June 19, July 10, 7.30pm; June 20, July 11, 11.30am.

**Joan Rodgers**, soprano, Malcolm Martineau, piano. Prokofiev Bicentenary concert including songs by Glinka, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rachmaninov, Prokofiev, & 20th-century chamber, June 22, 7.30pm. **Sonnerie.** Mozart Piano Quartets, June 25, 7.30pm. **Concordia, I Fagiolini.** Gibbons' *The Cries of London*, an evocation of the streets of early 17th-century London, & music for voices & viola by him & his contemporaries, July 18, 7pm. **Ronald Van Spaendonck**, clarinet, Alexandre Tharaud, piano, Jean-Guillaume Queyran, cello, Beethoven, Faure, Brahms, July 24, 7.30pm. MARGARET DAVIES



**The Proms:** Morris Jansons puts The Pittsburgh Orchestra through its paces for two nights in August.

**A family affair:** Acclaimed sitar Ravi Shankar is joined on stage by his daughter Anoushka.

## ★ HIGHLIGHT ★

**City of London Festival.** Opening in St Paul's Cathedral with Brahms' choral masterpiece *Ein deutsches Requiem* & closing in Guildhall with Purcell's masque *The Fairy Queen*, the programme ranges through the worlds of music, dance, theatre & literature & gives visitors access to the architectural splendour of the City. Other highlights will be the Gabrieli Consort's reconstruction of a Venetian coronation, the return of the Gogmagogs, left, combining verbal wit with musical virtuosity, & James Galway with the London Mozart Players in their 50th anniversary season, June 22, July 15. Box office: Barbican Centre, E2 (0171-638 8891).



## FESTIVALS

The festival scene caters for all tastes & offers plenty of opportunities to sample something new. The London events range from classical music in the City's historic buildings, through baroque music at the Luthana Festival, to a feast of Bengali food in Brick Lane at the Bangladesh Festival. Out of town you can see Shakespeare in the open air at Ludlow, follow the street theatre scene in Salisbury & there are the added attractions of the Suffolk coast at Aldeburgh & the surrounding Peak District at Buxton.

**Bangladesh Festival.** Exhibitions, music, cinema, theatre, dance, poetry, featuring every aspect of Bangladeshi culture, & a food festival will give direct songs, aria in chamber music by Purcell & Handel, June 17, 7.30pm. **The Lindsayays.** Haydn & Mendelssohn string quartets, June 19, July 10, 7.30pm; June 20, July 11, 11.30am. **Joan Rodgers**, soprano, Malcolm Martineau, piano. Prokofiev Bicentenary concert including songs by Glinka, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rachmaninov, Prokofiev, & 20th-century chamber, June 22, 7.30pm. **Sonnerie.** Mozart Piano Quartets, June 25, 7.30pm. **Concordia, I Fagiolini.** Gibbons' *The Cries of London*, an evocation of the streets of early 17th-century London, & music for voices & viola by him & his contemporaries, July 18, 7pm. **Ronald Van Spaendonck**, clarinet, Alexandre Tharaud, piano, Jean-Guillaume Queyran, cello, Beethoven, Faure, Brahms, July 24, 7.30pm. MARGARET DAVIES

gala, a concert performance of Bizet's *Carmen* in costume, given by English National Opera, & a fireworks finale of popular British music. June 11-19. Box office: PO Box 43, London WC2H 7JD (0171-317 344 4444). **Luthana Festival of Baroque Music.** St James's Baroque Players give Handel's *La Resurrezione* & Scarlatti's *Il Primo omicidio*. La Cappelletta de Turchini from Naples perform a selection of scenes from early 18th-century Neapolitan comic operas; other specialia groups taking part include Il Complesso Barocco, I Fagiolini & Europa Galante. All concerts are at St John's Smith Square, June 7-July 12. Box office: St John's Smith Sq, London SW1P 5JH (0171-222 1061).

**Spatialfields Festival.** Centred in Hawksmoor's Christ Church, the festival spans the millennium with a survey of music from 1,000 years ago, performed by the Ensemble Saraland & Gaelic Voices, to first performances of the music of today, including a commission from Michael Zev Gordon. Also taking part are two Oxford college choirs, period bands Sonnerie, La Serenissima & the Gabrieli Consort, & soloists Emma Kirkby & Philip Langridge. June 9-30. Box office: 73 Brookfield St, London E1 6AA (0171-377 1362). **OUT OF TOWN** **Aldeburgh Festival of Music & the Arts.** The opera *Pavane for the Face* by Thomas Adès, the new artistic director, will be performed by Birmingham Contemporary Music Group. Pianist Imogen Cooper accompanies the baritone Wolfgang Holzmair & performs with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra & the Bideca Quartet; Alfred Brendel

gives a piano recital & reads poems from his collection *One Finger Two Many*; Roger Vignoles gives three masterclasses with alumni from the Britten-Pearson School also recitals by the Lindsayays, Orlando Consort, Skampa Quartet & Steven Isserlis. June 11-27. Box office: High St, Aldeburgh, Suffolk IP15 5AN (01728 435543).

**Bath International Music Festival.** Early, classical & folk music, opera & burlesque all have a place in concerts held throughout the World Heritage city, with three

**Bangladeshi beat:** Drummers from Chittagong are just one of the many ingredients in the Bangladesh Festival in Brick Lane





weekends devoted to world music, jazz, and contemporary music focused on France. Artists appearing include pianists Paul Crossley & Barry Douglas, sopranos Amanda Roccoletti & Emma Kirkby, violinist Dmitri Sakevsky & guitarist John Williams. May 21-June 6. Box office: 2 Linc. Church St, Abbey Green, Bath BA1 1NL 01225 463362.

**Buxton Festival.** Opera in the centrepiece & opens the proceedings with a double bill of Donizetti's *Il Campanello di notte* & von Supplé's *The Beautiful Galatea*. Music Theatre Wales gives Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* & Clonter Opera's young artists perform Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. There are morning walks, lunchtime interludes & party pieces, afternoon recitals & a jazz festival, a flourishing fringe & all the attractions of the surrounding Peak District. July 15-25. Box office: Buxton Opera House, Water St, Buxton SK17 6XN 01599 721799.

**Cheltenham International Festival of Music.** Elgar's three symphonies are featured, one each weekend, as are the chamber works of Britten. Contemporary music looms large with first performances of works by Gerald Barry, David Sawer, Hugh Wood & Huw Watkins, plus much other modern music. Among the anniversaries celebrated are Poulenc's 200th with a composition by David Matthews & Chopin's 150th, with a series of piano tributes. July 3-18. Box office: Town Hall, Imperial St, Cheltenham GL50 1QX 01242 227979.

**Edinburgh International Festival.** The usual rich array of overseas visitors includes Dublin's



Albany Theatre; the Deutsches Schauspielhaus, Staat Theatre, Krakow, the Cullberg Ballet & Dutch National Ballet; the Ensemble Modern & orchestras from Pittsburgh, Vienna & Hamburg. Saluro Teshigahara will direct an all-Asian cast in Puccini's *Turandot* & Luc Bondy will direct Scottish Opera in Verdi's *Macbeth*. A new Festival centre, The Hub, comprising box office, cafe, shop & festival club opens in July. Aug 15-Sept 4. Box office: 21

**Viva Salisbury: A Spanish theme dominates the Salisbury Festival with Carlos Santos' tribute to Bach's music, above, and Peco Peña, right.**

Market St, Edinburgh EH1 1BW 0131 473 2000.

**Henley Festival.** Five action-packed evenings of music, art, sculpture, street-theatre, cabaret, food, wine & fireworks on the banks of the Thames. Artists taking part include singers Maria Ewing & Maria Friedman in concerts on the floating stage, Trinity College Swing Band, Kik & the Widow, the Southern Comfort Barbershop Quartet & Vis Plastica performance art company. July 7-11. Box office: 14 Priory St, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9 1AH 01491 824041.

**Ludlow Festival.** The castle ruins form the backdrop to Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Glen Walford. Country Matters, a new three-day literary festival celebrates sport, leisure, & the countryside. Also opera, ballet, poetry, recitals & exhibitions. June 26-July 11. Box office: Castle St, Ludlow, SY8 1AY 01584 872150.

**Salisbury Festival.** A Spanish theme running through the programme brings large-scale outdoor events by Catalan magicians Sarrag & pyrotechnicians Xarxa, Peco Peña's *Missa Flamenca* & Carlos

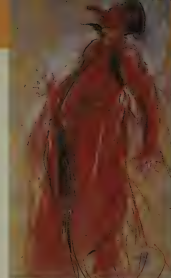
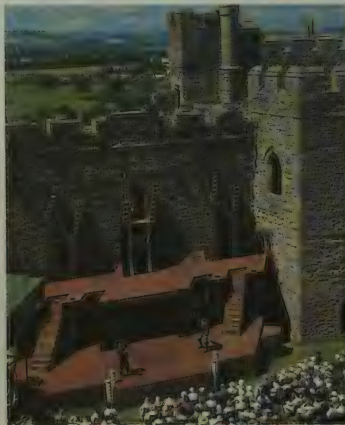
**Dream castle: 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', staged by Glen Walford, is directed outdoors at Ludlow.**



Santos' tribute to the music of Bach. A dozen street theatre companies come from the Continent; the 126-year-old Belgian Circus Ronoldo will play in Devizes & Salisbury; & from Outer Mongolia come the throat singers of Tuva. May 22-June 5. Box office: 75 New St, Salisbury SP1 2HH 01722 200333.

**York Early Music Festival.** Concerts are held in the historic Minster, the Guildhall & the city churches & feature the American renaissance wind band Piffaro, playing music from the Court of the Medici, the South African Choral with I Fagiolini, Mala Punica from Italy with the madrigals of Paolo da Firenze & Concertare in a Monteverdi & Gabrieli programme. July 2-11. Box office: PO Box 276, York YO1 6ZU 01904 638338.

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alongside works by Anish Kapoor, David Hockney, Howard Hodgkin & Richard Long. July 15-Aug 13. Tue 10am-5pm; Wed-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat, Sun 1-5pm. £3.50, concessions £2.

**Barbican Centre, EC2 0171-382 7103.** **David Bailey: Birth of the Cool.** This analysis of Bailey's career ranges from his days in the RAF, through fashion photography & portraiture, to studies of the homeless for *The Big Issue*. Until June 27.

**New Art for a New Era: Malevich's Vision of the Russian Avant-Garde.** Early 20th-century art—including works by Chagall, Kandinsky, Rodchenko, & Kasimir Malevich himself—from the State Russian Museum at St Petersburg. Until June 27. Mon-Sat 10am-6.45pm (Tues until 5.45pm; Wed until 7.45pm); Sun noon-6.45pm. £5, concessions £4; everybody Mon-Fri after 5pm £3.

**Great Russell St, WC1 0171-636 1555.**

**Cracking Codes: The Rosetta Stone & Decipherment.** A look at how this slab of basalt, discovered by the river Nile in 1799, provided the key to our understanding of ancient Egyptian culture. July 10-Jan 2000. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 2.30-6pm. £4, concessions £2.

**19 Carl St, W1 0171-734 7984.** **Degas' Bronzes.** Dancers, nudes & horses in movement are at the heart of a show of 25 bronze figures, some of which are for sale (£75,000-



£150,000). May 26-June 25. Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm. Closed May 31.

**Somerset House, Strand, WC2 0171-4772 2526.**

**The Value of Art.** Drawing on the Institute's collections of paintings, sculpture, ivories, glass & works on paper, the exhibition presents pairs of unlabelled works & challenges visitors

**Modern masters: 20th-century art at Duke of York's Barracks, above left, and The Barbican, above.**

to guess which is the most valuable. June 24-Aug 30. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 2-6pm. £4, concessions £2, children free.

**31 Cook St, W1 0171-439 1666.**

**David Hockney.** New prints & etchings by this most popular of British artists. June 8-July 24. Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm; Sat 10am-1pm.

**26 Shed Thames, SE1 0171-378 6855.**

**Verner Panton.** Brightly-colored, sensuously curved furniture conceived between the 1950s & 70s by this Danish designer, who died last year. June 17-Oct 10. Daily 11.30am-6pm. £3.50, concessions £4.

**100 Strand, SW1 0171-736 5346.**

**artLondon.** New 20th-century & contemporary British & international art fair, featuring figurative & abstract paintings & sculpture. June 16-20. Wed, Thurs 11am-6pm; Fri, Sat 11am-9pm; Sun 11am-5pm. £10 (includes catalogue).

**39a Cannonbury St, N1 0171-704 9322.**

**Morandi & his Time.** More than 20 paintings from the Giovenardi Collection by Giorgio Morandi, one of Italy's best-known 20th-century artists, & others by five of his contemporaries. May 26-Sept 19.

## It's a bug's life at London Zoo

A major new attraction of animals, stunning visuals and interactive displays has opened at London Zoo to highlight the amazing diversity of life on earth. Located in a new state-of-the-art glass

building, the Zoological Society of London's Web of Life exhibition features hundreds of weird and wonderful creatures from around the world and explains how they've evolved and how the planet's future depends on their survival.

Visitors to the new Millennium Conservation Centre are taken on a tour of the world's major habitats, calling in at deserts and rainforests, freshwater habitats and oceans, to observe how their inhabitants live. At the centre's specially recreated rainforest, for example, you learn about tarantulas and scorpions, while the ocean life exhibits show how giant clams, coral reef, jellyfish and cuttlefish thrive in their marine environment.

The £3.4-million project, partly funded by the Millennium Commission, highlights the plight that so many species now face as population pressures and habitat destruction threaten their existence. As well as explaining what can be done to save these animals, the

exhibits focus on the conservation initiatives underway worldwide including the Society's work to save threatened species such as the golden lion tamarin monkey, the Parula tree snail and the scalloped hammerhead shark.

Jo Gippi, director of London Zoo, is confident that the new attraction will be a huge success. "Web of Life will make people marvel at the variety of life on earth and give them a sense of how we can all work to conserve it," he says. "We believe we shall make the issues surrounding conservation of biodiversity accessible, relevant and interesting to the millennium generation."

The exhibition also puts the spotlight on invertebrates, so often overlooked even though they make up 97 per cent of the animal kingdom. The Micrarium provides a glimpse into a world normally invisible to the human eye where minute creatures such as nematode worms can be seen in all their splendour. *London Zoo, Regent's Park, London, NW1 4RY 0171-722 6177.*







**The Italian job:** Works by Giorgio Morandi on view at the Estorick Collection.

**In the looking glass:** Self-portraits by Rembrandt at the National Gallery.

fast-changing urban scene in China, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, Thailand, Singapore & other eastern countries. Until June 27.

**Chuck Close:** Portraits by a leading American artist of himself & his friends based on scaled-up & coloured photographs. July 22-Sept 19.

**Full Moon:** Photographic representation, from NASA's archives, of space journeys & lunar

Wed-Sat 11am-6pm; Sun noon-5pm. £3.50, concessions £2.50.

South Bank, SE1 (0171-928 3144).

Cities on the Move! Art & Architecture in Asia. The

## New gallery resurfaces

The City of London's Guildhall Art Gallery finally reopens this summer, nearly six decades after it was bombed in the Blitz, giving Londoners the opportunity to enjoy a fine collection of paintings and watercolours.

The original Guildhall Art Gallery was built in 1886 for the Corporation of London's collection, which was started in the 17th century. Located next to the historic Guildhall, the art gallery was bombed in October 1940 and then totally destroyed the following year.

In 1987, the temporary post-war structure was demolished and a new building proposed. Prior to construction, an archaeological excavation revealed the remains of a Roman amphitheatre of 120AD, leading to further delays. Some of the remains of the Roman amphitheatre are visible in the new gallery's basement, but they are



landings. July 22-Sept 19. Daily 10am-6pm (Tues, Wed until 8pm). £6, concessions £4.

**From the Bomb to the Beatles:** Exhibition showing two decades of post-war social & cultural changes, from austerity to affluence. Until late 1999. Daily 10am-6pm. £3.20, concessions £2.40, children free.

**17 Canton House Ternar:** SW1 (0171-309 6884).

**Society of Wildlife Artists:** Annual exhibition of paintings & other works depicting plant & animal life. July 22-Aug 6. Daily 10am-5pm. £2.50, concessions £1.

**London Works:** EC2 (0171-690 3609).

**The Eye that Never Sleeps:** Photographs of London by larger-than-life Eastender Terence Donovan. Until Aug 1. Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm; Sun noon-5.50pm. £5 (valid for 12 months), concessions £3.

**Wetinger St:** WC2 (0171-747 2885).

**His Working Summer:** A recently-acquired work by the German 16th-century artist is the focus of an exhibition on Wetinger's depictions of months & seasons. July 15-Sept 26.

**Rembrandt by Himself:** Self-portraits by the great Dutch master, include around 40 paintings & 35 drawings & etchings. June 9-Sept 5. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm (Wed until 8pm). Sun noon-6pm. £7, concessions £4.50.

**St Martin's Pt:** WC2 (0171-306 0055).

[www.smp.org.uk/](http://www.smp.org.uk/)

## Poetry in motion:

Edgar Degas' bronzes for sale at Brouse & Darby.

**Icons of Pop:** Evocative photographs of musical icons from the 1950s to the 90s such as Billy Fury, the Beatles, Marc Bolan, Oasis & the Spice Girls. June 4-Sept 19. Mon-Fri 10am-6pm; Sun noon-6pm.

**Raphael & His Circle:** Among 70 drawings on show are studies for holy



families, the Vatican Stanze & the Sistine tapestries, plus drawings by artist responsible for forming Raphael's early style—including his father, Giovanni Santi, & his principal teacher Perugino. May 21-Oct 10. Daily 9.30am-4.30pm. £4, OAPs £3, children £2.

## ★ HIGHLIGHT ★

**ANGLICAN MUSEUM**  
Greenwich, SE10 (0181-858 4422).

**Maritime Heritage:** Dramatic presentations of Britain's seafaring history in 16 new galleries. Specially commissioned artworks include the sound of waves on the shore & film of locations familiar from radio shipping forecasts. Imaginative displays feature cargoes (with a walk-in steel container), ocean liners, uniforms & survival equipment, insurance at Lloyd's, smuggling, exploration, trade in plants—from tea to cotton—and a look at the future of the seas. Children can obtain hands-on experience of steering, signalling & gunnery, & families can picnic indoors in a mock-up of a submarine. Daily 10am-5pm. £7.50, concessions £6, children free.

**Novodily:** W7 (0171-300 8060).

**Kandinsky: watercolours & other works on paper.** First major exhibition in this country devoted to the Russian painter Vasily Kandinsky, one of the first exponents of abstract art. Until July 4. £6, concessions £3.80, students £4, children £2.50 & £1.50.

**231st Summer Exhibition.** Claimed to be the world's largest open contemporary art show, it features more than 1,000 works from a submission of around 10,000. June 7-Aug 15. £7.50, concessions £6, students £3, children £2.50 & £1.50. Daily 10am-6pm (during June & July, Sun until 8.30pm; during Aug, Fri until 8.30pm).

**Millard:** SW1 (0171-887 3008).

**Abra Cadabra:** Work by 16 international contemporary artists, presented in a convivial & humorous manner. July 15-Sept 26. £3, concessions £3.

**When Robots Rule:** The two-minute airplane factory. American artist Chris Burden has created a factory-like assembly line which makes rubber-hand-powered model aeroplanes. As it is finished, each plane is flown around the gallery before being put on sale to visitors. Until June 27.

**Clare Gallery:**

**Turner on the Seine:** Watercolour & gouache sketches, & the finished paintings to which they relate, show early-19th-century views of the river & of the city of Paris. June 29-Oct 3. Daily 10am-5.50pm.

**THE ARTS OF THE SIKH KINGDOMS.** The Sikh religion explained through paintings & illustrations, including jewelry, textiles & weapons from the treasury of Ranjit Singh, the first Sikh Maharajah of the Punjab. Until July 25.

**Designing in the Digital Age:** A look at the effect of computer technology on the output of contemporary designers, from conception to production of some familiar domestic items. June 30-Jan 3, 2000.

Daily 10am-5.45pm. £5, OAPs £3, concessions & children free.

ANGELA BIRD



## SPORT

**Cricketers are promised a feast of play this summer, with the final stages of the World Cup, followed by the Test series against New Zealand. Silverstone crowds will be encouraging David Coulthard, Damon Hill & Eddie Irvine to give of their best in the Formula 1 Grand Prix, while in Scotland the world's top golfers drive for glory in quieter vein during the Open Championship.**

## ★ HIGHLIGHT ★

**World Cup:** Super Six Group A v B2, June 4, *The Oval*, SE1; A1 v B1, June 5, *Trent Bridge*, Nottingham; A3 v B3, June 6, *Headingley*, Leeds; A2 v B1, June 8, *Old Trafford*, Manchester.

A3 v B2, June 9, *Lord's*, NW8; A1 v B3, June 10, *Edgbaston*, Birmingham.

A3 v B1, June 11, *The Oval*; A2 v B3, June 12, *Trent Bridge*; A1 v B2, June 13, *Headingley*.

**Semi-final:** June 16, *Old Trafford*; **Final:** June 17, *Edgbaston*.

**World Cup:** Final, June 30, *Lord's*. *Teletext* 0870 096 1999.

**Cornhill Insurance Test series:** England v New Zealand. First Test, July 1-5, *Edgbaston* (0121-446 4422); Second Test, July 22-26, *Lord's* (0171-289 8791); Third Test, Aug 5-9, *Old Trafford* (0161-282 4000); Fourth Test, Aug 19-23, *The Oval* (0171-582 7764).

**NatWest Trophy final:** Aug 29, *Lord's*.

The three England-based events will give a foretaste of Britain's chances in the World Championships. Look out for Colin Jackson in the hurdles, Ivan Thomas in the 100m, & Ashia Hansen & Jonathan Edwards in women's & men's triple jump respectively.

**IAAF Permit Meeting:** June 27. *Gatehead International Stadium*, Tyne & Wear (0191-478 1697).

**AAA Championships:** July 23-25. *Alexander Stadium*, Birmingham (0121-356 8600).

**IAAF British Grand Prix II:** Aug 7. *Dun Valley Stadium*, Sheffield (014236 0607).

**World Championships:** Aug 20-27. *Seville*, Spain (0121-456 3098).

**Royal International Horse Show** (incorporating the British Nations' Cup): July 7-11. *Holkham*, on *Haywards Heath*, W Sussex (01293 834315).

**European Showjumping Championships & British Jumping Derby:** Aug 25-29. *Holkham*.

*Hall*, on *Hebden*, *Northumberland* (01538 703412).

**Open Championship:** July 15-18. *Garnett*, on *Hebden*, *Northumberland* (01538 703412).

**Weekend Women's British Open:** Aug 12-15. *Whorlton Golf & Country Club*, *Alnham*, *Northumberland* (01903 370730).

**England v Sweden** (European championship qualifier): June 5. *Wembley Stadium*, *London* (0171-289 8791).

**FA Charity Shield:** Aug 12-15. *Wembley Stadium*.

Britain's hopes for the gelling championships will be resting on Lee Kitchener, Colin Monger & Nick Faldo in Scotland, & Alison Nicholas at Woburn.

**Compaq European Grand Prix:** June 24-27. *De Vere*, *Slaley*.



**Good luck to...** Greg Rusedski, above left, at *Wimbledon*, Ivan Thomas, above, in the 400m *World Championships*, and Damon Hill, below, in the *Grand Prix*.

**Vodafone Oaks:** June 4. *Epson*, *Surrey* (01372 770472).

**Vodafone Derby:** June 5. *Epson*, *Gold Cup*, June 17. *Ascot*, *Berkshire* (01344 622211).

**King George VI & Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes:** July 21. *Ascot*.

**"Clorious Goodwood":** July 27.







**Watch the birdie:** All eyes will be on Lee Westwood in the Open Championship.

**31. Goodwood, nr Chichester, W Sussex** (01243 755022).

**Le Mans 24 Hours.** June 12-13. *Le Mans, Sarthe, France* (0033 2 43 40 24 24).

**British Grand Prix.** July 11. *Silverstone, nr Towcester, Northants* (01753 681736).

**POLO**  
The two major national prizes are fought out in Windsor & Midhurst, with the two winning teams meeting

to contest the Prince Philip Trophy on Cartier International day, just before the big international match. **Queen's Cup final.** June 13. *Guard's Club, Windsor* (01794 434212).

**Veuve Clicquot Gold Cup final** (British Open Championship), July 19. *Coudray Park, nr Midhurst, W Sussex* (01730 813257).

**Cartier International Day: England's Australasia.** July 23. *Guard's Club, Windsor.*

**BOATING**  
**Henley Royal Regatta.** June 30-July 4. *Henley-on-Thames, Oxon* (01491 372133).

**SAILING**  
**Skandia Life Cowes Week.** July 31-Aug 7. *Cowes, Isle of Wight* (01983 293744). See box below.

**Fastnet Race.** Aug 7. *Starts & finishes Cowes* (0171 493 2248).

**TENNIS**  
Pete Sampras & Jana Novotna will be defending their titles against the world's best players. British spectators will be rooting for Tim Henman, Greg Rusedski & Samantha Smith.

**Stella Artois Championships** (men), June 7-13. *Queen's Club, Palliser Rd, W4* (0181-875 0044).

**DFS Classic Ladies.** June 7-13. *Edgbaston Priory Club, Birmingham* (0171-381 7022).

**The Championships.** June 21-July 4. *All England Club, Wimbledon, SW19* (0181-946 2244).

ANGELA BIRD



## OTHER EVENTS

**Music & spectacle spill into the streets at the Queen's birthday parade.** & for the more recent summer tradition of Notting Hill Carnival. New events in London include the Regent's Park Flower Show & the Docklands London on Water event, & the capital's parks & gardens will be alive with entertainment from brass bands to poetry readings.

**Rose Theatre.** Modern animation techniques breathe life into the remains of a 16th-century playhouse where Shakespeare saw his first theatrical works performed. Daily 10am-5pm. *Rose Court, Southwark Bridge, SE1* (0171-207 6280). See box story on page 60.

**Bhangra.** In connection with the V&A's exhibition *The Art of the Sikh Kingdoms*, the Jagan Bhangra Group performing a Punjabi folk dance traditionally associated with Asian celebrations. May 29, June 26; 12.30pm, 2pm & 3.30pm. *Pirelli Garden, Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Rd, SW7* (0171-938 8349).

**Wildlife Week.** Playing its part in this nationwide appreciation of Britain's flora & fauna, the London

Wildlife Trust organises walks & talks on everything from bats to butterflies, glow-worms to dragonflies that can be found in its 60 nature reserves throughout the capital. June 5-12. *Various venues* (0171-267 0447). See feature, page 50.

**London Garden Squares Day.** Poetry readings, live classical music, strawberry teas & Pimms tastings will be among delights on offer in some of the city's leafy oases. More than 50 private garden squares, including the Inner & Middle Temple gardens (EC4) & those of exclusive Eaton Square (SW1), are opening their gates to the public for one day in aid of "green" charities. June 6, 10am-5pm. *Various venues* (0171-973 3434).

**Royal Parks Summer Season.** Among a variety of free outdoor entertainment will be jazz, brass band & operatic performances, open-air theatre,

**Take to the hill:** Enjoy the colour, music and costumes at Notting Hill Carnival.

**Magic carpets:** At the Hali Antique Carpets Fair at Olympia in June.

## All deco-ed out at Eltham

**E**ltham Palace in southeast London was the epitome of style and glamour in the 1930s, its interiors modelled on Hollywood film sets and ocean liners and fitted out with the latest household gadgets. More than 60 years later, the mansion, built for millionaire Stephen Courtauld and his wife Virginia, has been brought back to life thanks to an ambitious £2 million project managed and funded by English Heritage.

Set in magnificent grounds, with a moat, the art deco house adjoins the west end of the medieval Great Hall of the original Eltham Palace, the boyhood home of Henry VIII, which the Courtaulds extensively restored. The original contents of the house, including an impressive collection of paintings and Turner watercolours and specially commissioned furniture by leading designers, disappeared when the couple moved out in 1945. The house subsequently became the headquarters of the Army Education Corps.

Some of the house's original panelling and ornate decorative features, such as Virginia's gink mosaic bathroom and the domed entrance hall, have survived almost intact. However, most of the interiors and the original furnishings have been lost and have had to be recreated by a team of expert craftsmen using archival material, mainly photographs donated by friends and family, in 1937 *Country Life* article, and a 1939 inventory of the house.

"The Courtaulds established Eltham at the



forefront of taste, fashion and new design ideas. It is one of the most perfect art deco interiors in the country," explains Treve Rosoman, English Heritage's curator in charge of the interiors. One of the most striking rooms, says Rosoman, is the dining room with its silver ceilings, black marble-edged floors and exquisite black doors

decorated with applied silver animals copied from life drawings made at London Zoo (pictured left). "The maple dining chairs have pink leather seats because pink was considered to be a good colour to show off women's frocks," he adds laughing.

The Courtaulds introduced many innovative features into their home, some copied from the sets of Hollywood movies, others from luxurious cruise liners, and many never seen before in Britain. They installed an all-electric kitchen with a stainless steel sink, concealed lighting, electric clocks, a loudspeaker system, and built-in furniture in the 11 bedrooms. Even the Courtaulds' pet, a ring-tailed lemur called Mah-Jongg, was housed in style in a cage with murals on the first floor with a bamboo ladder connecting it to the ground floor.

Rosoman describes the Courtaulds' lifestyle as one of "muted magnificence". "They were very private people and they certainly weren't ostentatious. Stephen was the brother of textile magnate Samuel Courtauld, founder of the Courtauld Institute of Art, and after serving in World War I, he devoted his time to art, gardening and bankrolling the early British film industry as director of Ealing Studios." *Eltham Palace, off Court Rd, SE8, Open Wed-Fri & Sun from June 16. Tel: 0181-294 2350 for opening times. Entry prices: House & grounds £3.50, concessions £4.10, children £2.75; grounds only £3.30, concessions £2.75, children £1.65. English Heritage members free.* CLAIRE HUTCHINGS

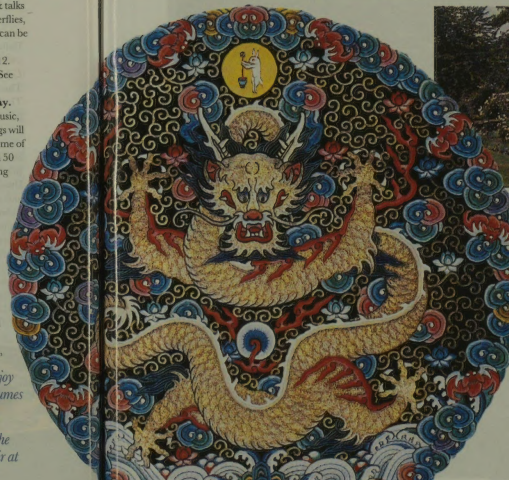
## The greatest show on water

The kaleidoscope of coloured spinners at Skandia Life Cowes Week promises to be the most spectacular yet as a record number of Maxi yachts over 70 feet long, the largest class in the competition, gather to do battle in the most prestigious event in the sailing calendar.

More than 900 boats of differing sizes will be contending in over 200 races during the first week of August, each day's activities beginning at 10.30am from the Royal Yacht Squadron canteen in Cowes. From the best vantage points at The Parade and the grassy bank of The Green, you are guaranteed to see some nail-biting action, particularly at high tide when competitors sail close to shore, tacking to and fro against wind and tide, as they approach the finish line.

A truly cosmopolitan affair, the regatta attracts sailors of all abilities, from top internationals to small club enthusiasts, as well as celebrities and royalty. HRH Prince Philip has been a regular visitor for 40 years and the Princess Royal and Prince Edward usually compete at the beginning of the week.

However, it is not sailing alone that draws the crowds. Cowes Week is one of the most important dates in the social calendar with a glittering round of cocktail parties, balls and concerts, culminating, on the last Friday of the week, in a fantastic fireworks display on the lawn of the Royal Yacht Squadron.



& puppet, magic & clown shows. Large-scale ticketed events include the new Regent's Park Flower Show (see feature, page 16) & a series of pop concerts—one featuring Cliff Richard (July 16 to 18), June 8-Aug 30. *Bushy, Greenwich, Hyde, Regent's, Richmond & St James's Parks, Horse Guards Parade & Kensington Gardens* (information from London Library of tourist office), [www.regentparks.co.uk/](http://www.regentparks.co.uk/)

## Square dance: Edwardes Square, W8, one of many open to the public in June.

late-17th, 18th, 19th & 20th centuries; another, from West Dean, in Sussex, contains important Surrealist works. June 9-13. Wed 11am-5pm; Thurs-Fri 11am-6pm (Thurs, Fri & Mon until 8pm). *Grosvenor House, Park Lane, W1* (0171-493 8743).

**Hali Antique Carpets & Textile Art Fair.** More than 60 exhibitors display examples of fine woven art spanning five continents & two millennia. June 10-14. Thurs 5-8pm; Fri-Sun 11am-8pm; Mon 11am-5pm. *Olympia, W14* (0171-970 4000).

**International Ceramics Fair & Seminar.** As well as antique & contemporary ceramics, this show includes a special loan exhibition of 18th-century English porcelain from private collections. June 11-14. Fri-Sun 11am-8pm; Mon 11am-7pm. *Park Lane Hotel, Piccadilly, W1* (0171-734 5411).

**Trooping the Colour.** Stirring military spectacle in celebration of the Queen's official birthday. The sovereign progresses up The Mall in a



## On trail in London

**T**he only way really to see London is by putting your best foot forward and, with the help of one of the new walking guides available, you can plan a fantastic day out.

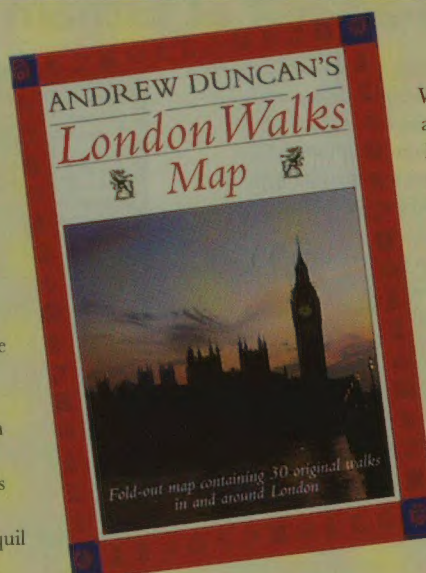
English Heritage has published five terrific London walks as part of its new Time Trails, a series of countrywide walks, designed for all ages and fitness levels, and created to inspire people to go out and discover England's rich heritage. As well as maps and full directions for each of the trails, descriptions of points of interest, with opening times, are provided.

Varying in length from half a mile to four miles, each of the London walks has a different historic theme. If you fancy a mix of maritime history with 21st-century living, try the two mile *Millennium Trail*, which takes in the Old Royal Observatory and National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, passing the Trafalgar Tavern, a popular haunt for writers such as Dickens and Thackeray, and finishing up at Docklands and the Millennium Dome. Or combine the city's popular attractions like Big Ben and the Tower of London with its lesser known sites including the Clink, a small museum on the site of a former prison of the same name, and the Jewel

Tower, Edward III's personal treasure house, on the *Tower to Tower* trail.

The shortest of the English Heritage trails goes *In the Footsteps of Prince Albert* to the Albert Memorial, Albert Hall and the Victoria and Albert Museum, while *Romancing the Thames* explores the banks of the River Thames incorporating Richmond Palace and Richmond Park and moving on to the naked lady statues at Twickenham. Finally, Darwin's *Rural Ramble* guides walkers through the beautiful and tranquil Kent countryside near Charles Darwin's home, Down House.

English Heritage is not alone in publishing walking guides for the summer. Publisher New Holland has recently produced *Andrew Duncan's London Walks*, price £5.99, a fabulous fold-out map featuring 30 of the best walks from Duncan's best-selling walking guides. One longish walk takes you across four of the five royal parks in central London passing



Wellington Museum and Kensington Palace, while another passes through Barnes, which retains many of the features of its former village existence, including a pond and green overlooked by the village pub. Finally, for something completely different, try *Walking Haunted London* by

Richard Jones, also

published by New Holland and priced £9.99, which features 25 walks through the city's ghostly past, from the alleyways of the old city to Pluckley in Kent, which is apparently England's most haunted village. Call English Heritage's Time Trail Hotline on 0171-973 3399 for your free walking leaflet to London and eight other regions.

CLAIRE HUTCHINGS

horse-drawn landau to inspect serried scarlet ranks of soldiers from the Household Division. June 12, 10.40am-1pm. *The Mall & Horse Guards Parade, SW1* (0171-414 2396).

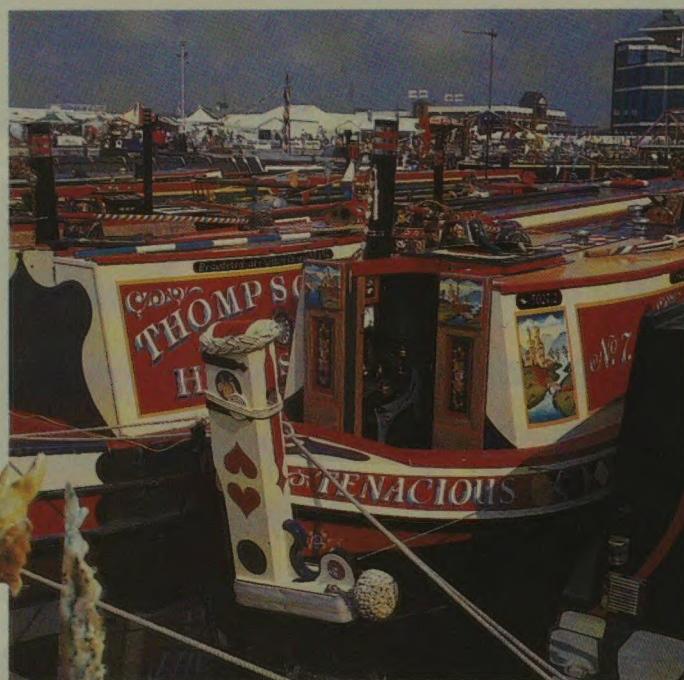
**The Great Outdoors.** In a programme of weekend entertainment, the South Bank's riverside terraces will be transformed by musicians (from drummers to Cuban bands), & performers of every kind—including climbers, who will be scaling some of the neighbourhood's taller buildings. July 4-Aug 22. Sat, Sun 2-6pm. *South Bank, SE1* (0171-960 4242).

**National Quilt Championships.** Entries for this competition come from Britain & overseas, with prizes awarded for quilted & embroidered textile art in various categories including millennium & cinematic themes. Demonstrations, talks & workshops for both experts & beginners, & a host of needlework-related trade stands. July 8-11, 10am-5pm. *Olympia, W14* (01603 629292).

**Fête Champêtre:** "Fifty Years of Film". A movie theme sets the tone for an open-air extravaganza in the National Trust's landscape

**Life afloat:** Get your feet wet at the *London on Water Show* in Docklands in August.

**Cock of the walk:** The *Park Lane Hotel* will be hosting the *International Ceramics Fair* in June.



garden at Claremont. Visitors are encouraged to take picnics, & to dress as film stars or Hollywood moguls; strolling entertainers add to the magical atmosphere as darkness falls, & the evening ends with a firework display over the lake. July 14-17, 7pm. *Claremont, nr Esher, Surrey* (booking on 01372 451596/457223).

**London on Water Show.** Hundreds of river, canal &

seagoing boats gather in Docklands, forming a backdrop for a wide range of shore- & water-based activities. Also featured will be children's events, jet-ski racing & a seafood fair. Aug 26-30. *Canary Wharf & West India Dock areas, E14* (01923 201120). **Notting Hill Carnival.** The annual explosion of Caribbean music & verve, with bands & processions cutting a colourful swathe through the streets of north Kensington. Aug 29, 30; noon-7pm. *Ladbroke Grove area, W11* (0181-964 0544).

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